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My Native Land

I am not born for one corner; the whole world is my native land.

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My Native Land

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By
LOUIS ADAMIC

Illustrated

Harper & Brothers
New York and London

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MY NATIVE LAND

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TO
BOZHA AND BAH-TCH

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Pictures Drawn Against Darkness

Love in Slovenia

IN MIDSPRING 1932—ONLY A FEW DAYS BUT ALSO AGES AGO—MY wife and I came to Yugoslavia for a year's visit. In the early summer we stayed awhile at Bohin Lake, a beautiful place in the northern part of my native Slovenia.

Toward sundown one day we walked up the mountainside in back of the little hotel. Bathed in pungent pine scent, the path wound over protruding roots of great trees and among glacial boulders. We came to a knoll where several trails met and trees had been cut to open a wide view of the lake. One trail led to Triglav, the highest and most famous mountain in Slovenia, in all of Yugoslavia.

The clearing on the knoll was full of an intense trembling light at once white and reddish, cool and warm, harsh and soothing. The sun would set any minute now; meantime except for the restless brilliancy the air and the forest were dead-still.

Stella and I sat on a stone under a low-hanging bough of a great hemlock at the clearing's edge and watched the lake below slip into shadow. Then we heard the sound of hurrying hob-nailed boots on the steep, gravelly Triglav trail . . . and a moment later a boy and a girl bounded into the refulgent shimmer and stopped short at the convergence of trails, where the knoll was highest and the view best.

Dazzled by the radiance, the youngsters did not see us; perhaps too we were partly concealed by the low-hanging hemlock branch.

The boy was hatless, with a shock of sun-bleached brown hair, rather tall, hard and thin as a rail. The girl's hair was dark, and she was a head shorter than he, quite small and also very thin. They had evidently been on a long tramp; the alpine sun had burnished their faces and naked forearms to a deep, lucent brown.

Their khaki clothes, loose on slender frames, were worn and faded. Stuck in a button-hole of the boy's shirt was a hawk's wing-feather. The girl's colored kerchief had slid down on her neck and there was

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an edelweis in her hair. He carried a rucksack and a blanket-roll, she a rucksack and a binocular case.

Facing the lake and the sun, which put a rutilant sheen on their skin, they stood on that spot for possibly ten seconds without moving or saying a word. Then they abruptly faced each other and smiled strangely as though with a private understanding. And thus they remained for another few seconds.

The boy looked about fifteen and the girl a year or so younger. Later we learned they were both sixteen, going on seventeen. But there was a startling hint of maturity in their expressions as they gazed at each other. They were obviously not brother and sister. And the feeling between them was not adolescent infatuation, not calf love, but something almost grown-up, intransient, inevitable

They were watching the setting sun's trembling light on each other's faces. Then the instant before shadow engulfed the knoll with the rest of the mountainside, the girl rose quickly, eagerly on her toes and the boy bent down a little and pressed his cheek briefly against hers.

I have never witnessed a more appealing scene or one more filled with drama. For a moment, rising on the tiniest ripple in the time-stream, the boy and the girl were the core of all meaning, the sudden and significant center of everything that lived and mattered.

Perhaps this knoll, this trails' crossing, had some special and secret importance for them at this hour of day. Perhaps it was Bohin Lake that was important and they had wanted to see it at sundown from the clearing. They had run ahead to be alone there for half a minute: two slight figures on a spotlighted stage just before the spotlight dimmed out.

After the sun had set there were other footfalls coming down the steep rough end of the Triglav trail . . . and a middle-aged man, carrying a rucksack and a blanket-roll, emerged.

He smiled to the boy and the girl and said he hoped they would not be late for the bus. The young people smiled too and hurried ahead of him down the path on which Stella and I had come up.

After a while we followed them.

The man was Oton Zupanchich, Slovenia's foremost poet. He had been that in the early 1910s before I emigrated to America, and he still was, now in his mid-fifties; a lyrical poet, kin of Keats and Shelley, of Verhaeren and Verlaine, but scarcely known outside Europe and none too well there. He wrote in a language spoken by

a nation of hardly two million, and in so intimate an idiom that adequate translation into other tongues, particularly the non-Slavic ones, is nearly impossible. Stella and I had first met him and his wife soon after our arrival in Yugoslavia. He was director of the state theater in Lublyana, the capital of Slovenia.

Lest the youngsters might suspect we had seen them on the knoll if we followed too closely, we strolled back to the hotel, but we got there before the departure of the bus whose station was directly in front. The passengers still stood about.

Oton Zupanchich greeted us warmly and said he knew we were staying here—had just inquired for us in the hotel. He introduced the girl as Bozha Ravnikhar and the boy as his son—by his nickname, Bah-tch. (I write it phonetically so that English-speaking tongues may approximate the Slovenian pronunciation.)

But there was no chance then for Stella and me to get acquainted with the young people. The driver called the passengers into the bus. Oton Zupanchich barely had time to ask us to visit them—they had a cottage at Bled Lake, a short ride from Bohin.

In the next two weeks we saw a good deal of the Zupanchiches and of little Bozha Ravnikhar, who was with them at Bled for the summer. And later during our stay in Yugoslavia we went several times to the poet's apartment in Lublyana where we also saw Bozha every time Bah-tch was home. They were inseparable.

Bah-tch I had known of before we met him. He was the original of "Ciciban" (Tsi-tsi-bahn), the mischievous birdlike boy-hero in a cycle of his father's poems for children which were popular all through Slovenia. And now we learned that he was also well known as a skillful swimmer and skier and an intrepid mountain-climber.

Part of this renown he shared with Bozha, his equal in boldness, physical aptness and stamina, if not in actual strength. In the last two years they had scaled some of the highest peaks in Slovenia, swum the width and length of all the big lakes, ski'd down many dangerous slopes, and come to know intimately all the mountain regions in the country.

Observing the youngsters closely, it soon seemed to us that, while Bah-tch was very much the poet's son, Bozha was the poetry itself, a budding personification of the Slovenia of Zupanchich's lyric flights and discoveries. She was not pretty in the usual sense. A snapshot would show a plainness of contour and features. At times she was so withdrawn, so gathered in around the excitement inside her, as to seem subdued. Then Oton Zupanchich's hand, if he happened to be

near, would reach out and touch her hair or hand, and she would come intensely alive, vivid as a bird, taking in everything about her, while Bah-tch's face would light up with wondering tenderness.

When Stella and I became acquainted with them, they had been in love for two years. Their attitude and manner toward each other had a fragrance one could not help breathing. And there was about them also a hard, sure shining young quality which presently we ventured to define as faith.

Youthful love-matches which reached into adulthood were not uncommon in Slovenia, and all who knew Bozha and Bah-tch believed that in time they would marry. They were a special young couple to many people. Their parentage no doubt had something to do with it. Bozha's father was not as influential in the life of Slovenia as Oton Zupanchich, but he was an eminent lawyer and a leading public figure in Lublyana, well known outside the city. But even more, the romantic aura about them existed because one was rarely seen without the other, and people had come to have a stake in them, in their entity. Their bright development was a promise to be kept. We never heard anyone refer to them separately, it was always "Bozha and Bah-tch."

They were classmates in a Lublyana gymnasium, whose curriculum is equivalent to that of the American high-school and junior college, plus required courses in Greek and Latin. In the autumn of '32 they started in the sixth class, having two more to go before *matura*, or graduation.

Their future was all laid out. They had laid it out themselves, and saw it as clearly ahead as any two young people could see their future in Slovenia or for that matter anywhere in Yugoslavia or the Balkans in '32.

They had chosen medicine. This was the field which they thought was most in need of people who wanted to work unselfishly, and which was most likely to permit them to work in that spirit.

They themselves of course never applied the word "unselfish" to their attitude and aim in life. Healthy and vital themselves, with an impulse to act, they wanted to—they *had* to get at disease, to prevent and heal. They did not think of themselves, did not scheme. There was no thought of position for position's sake, or income's.

Here was a paradox which interested me greatly. Their unselfishness gave them freedom to be utterly themselves—selfish in the most valid sense. It allowed them a mutual devotion, simultaneously mystical and simple, fierce and matter-of-fact. The deepening community of

their interests was continually creative in the development of their characters and personalities.

The elder Zupanchiches were pleased from the start that Bah-tch and Bozha had decided to be doctors. Bozha's father had objected for a while. He had wanted Bozha to study law, but she couldn't. And so Lawyer Ravnikhar had reconciled himself to her going into medicine with Bah-tch. His friend Oton Zupanchich had helped win his approval, maintaining it was best to let the young people follow their own bent.

While unquestionably idealistic, Bozha and Bah-tch were tough-minded about what they wanted to do. Their ideas and viewpoints were similar, differing only in expression and color; they had come by most of them jointly.

One day we talked of rulers and politicians. They had no respect for them. Rulers and politicians, they thought, merely juggled human problems, they did not advance solutions. The best of them did little more than manipulate social ills and incongruities, the rest were referees in futility. Of course Bozha and Bah-tch knew only Yugoslav rulers and politicians, those in Slovenia at close hand, but they had a strong suspicion that what was true of them in Yugoslavia was true elsewhere.

Life in Slovenia, in Yugoslavia and the Balkans, they felt, called for a great deal of fundamental work on the part of those who by virtue of their advantages could presume to any sort of leadership. And they proposed to do what little they could a few years hence by devoting themselves to some aspect of the problem of ill health. The Slovenian nation was not among the worst off in Europe in this respect, but both on the land and in the cities too many people had improper or inadequate diet and too little medical attention. Bozha and Bah-tch believed that this before anything else kept people from developing their potentialities individually and collectively. They scorned the claim that health conditions in Slovenia were better than in parts of Italy and France. They asked how bad they were there.

Bozha and Bah-tch had avid far-ranging minds. In addition to their native tongue and Serbo-Croatian, which they knew fluently, they could also read—with lessening dependence on dictionaries—French, English, German, Czech, Polish and Russian. And they kept themselves informed about world events and trends. Since their special intellectual focus was on the health problem, they were excited and impressed by the progress in public health in Soviet Russia, and read with particular eagerness everything they got hold of pertaining

to it. They were deeply interested in the great Russian scientist Pavlov, in his research in conditioned reflexes, in his whole magnificent approach to the mystery of life. Bah-tch thought off and on he might go into medical research. Bozha believed the application to masses of people of what was already known was even more urgent.

Their plans were tentatively worked out in considerable detail for ten years ahead. After completing gymnasium in '34, their medical training would require another six years and they meant to study two years each in Prague, Warsaw and the Soviet Union. Then in '41 they would return to Slovenia and go to work.

Their plans were tentative only because they did not know—no one knew—when the next war would break out in Europe, in the world. They hoped to be professionally trained before then. They felt there was not much time.

After seeing them perhaps half a dozen times, Stella and I noticed with pleasure that Bozha and Bah-tch were beginning to accept us as friends. We were leaving Yugoslavia in a few months and suggested that they visit us in America some day; we would show them around. We meant to revisit Yugoslavia but didn't know just when. We promised each other to keep in touch.

One day about two months before we returned to America, Bozha and Stella, feeling suddenly very much drawn to each other, had a talk by themselves, mixing English and German. Bozha spoke passionately of Oton, as both she and Bah-tch habitually called the poet. She knew many of his verses by heart and was sorry Stella did not know Slovenian so she could read them.

She told her about one of the poems, "Advice to My Young Son," written when Bah-tch was ten, in which the poet-father urged his too-studious boy not to spend so much time bending over text books and worrying about exams lest he grow up pale and stoop-shouldered. He ought to go outdoors more, into the fields and villages and mountains and forests of Slovenia, to the lakes and rivers. It was wise to establish kinship with the birds and frogs and bugs and fishes, with creatures of all kinds, and with stones and trees and grasses and woods and flowers growing in low places and high, and with the earth itself and the people who lived close to it, and with their ways and tasks and tools. . . .

That poem, said Bozha, had greatly influenced Bah-tch and her, and thousands of other young people. Partly in consequence, they were spending all their spare time prowling through villages and hamlets,

swimming in summer, ski'ing and skating and sleighing in winter, climbing mountains, spanning chasms with rope bridges, sleeping in shepherds' huts, in lean-tos and caves. Thousands knew every cave, cliff and ravine in the country. This gave them a new spirit, a clean boldness. And they loved Slovenia—consciously, with their eyes open —as no large number of Slovenians of any previous generation had loved it.

This was splendid, Bozha went on, but not enough. Now the poet's way and vision would have to be made concrete, definite, in the daily life of the Slovenian nation. For their part Bah-tch and she were going to do what they could by helping people out of the muck of illness.

Bozha's face glowed as she spoke of Oton and of the plans she and Bah-tch had made. Then she paused and a sharp change came over her. She looked much older than seventeen, sad and angry; her voice, exultant before, now was hard and precise:

"We are not the way we ought to be, the way we could be, we Slovenians. Our land is beautiful; so far as I know, there is no lovelier place on earth—but it's a trap. We live here, a small people surrounded by stronger nations, and we are trapped. Our spirit cannot really rise to match the wonder of Bohin and Bled and Triglav, so we're not yet worthy of it. Some of us are such poor things.

"We have a thousand years of foreign misrule and oppression behind us. Right now four hundred thousand Slovenians are under Fascist rule in Italy. Our men have had to fight in dozens of wars through the centuries, not for themselves, but for people they had nothing in common with. And for a long time now there hasn't been enough to go around. There hasn't been enough to eat, and many Slovenians have gone away to North and South America. . . . Even people like us who are supposed to be well off have to pinch and scheme, so we can push toward our pitiful ambitions and 'make our careers' and acquire things that give us the illusion of security and 'standing' and 'culture.' . . . Yes, I know that this is pretty much true of all Europeans, probably of people everywhere, but it is more perhaps most true of us Slovenians, us Yugoslavs. There are so few of us, we can least afford it."

Then forcing a smile Bozha said: "I am sorry I talked like this. I didn't mean to. You are leaving Yugoslavia soon and I know we should not let you go with an unpleasant impression; but what I said is true, and you may as well know how some of us really feel. On the other hand, you must not think I did not mean what I said to you a

minute ago. I did. It is splendid to be Yugoslav, to be Slovenian, to live here, now, even now, but it is also terrible. . . . Last week in Germany this man Hitler came to power ——"

Nearly everybody we met in Yugoslavia who had any understanding of the Nazi idea was depressed by Hitler's rise.

As though thinking aloud, Bozha said, "A while ago Bah-tch and I were talking of the future—not our own specially but the future as a general idea. What is it? When does it begin? What is time? Does 'the future' really 'stretch ahead' of one? Bah-tch and I don't think so. We think it is right here, this moment, swirling about us. Are we just going to let it pile up around us, as the last generation let it pile up around them to become the past which weighs us down so much now? . . . Oh, curses, Bah-tch and I are not ready yet, we are so young, we have so much to learn."

One reason why our friendship with Bozha and Bah-tch grew so well was that roaming about Yugoslavia we frequently met Dr. Andriya Stampar, a big moon-faced Croatian whom I called "Doctor Hercules" and whom they admired intensely. They wanted to know everything about our meetings with him.[1]

He had been Director of Public Health and Hygiene in the Ministry of Public Welfare in Belgrade from 1919 to '30, when King Alexander, on making himself Dictator of Yugoslavia, had removed him from that position so he would not develop too much power with the people. But before this had happened, Stampar—with some aid from the Rockefeller Foundation—had cleaned up typhus and malaria in the worst-afflicted regions of Yugoslavia. On every possible occasion, and for all the world to hear, he cried at the top of his voice that one of civilization's greatest crimes was offering the full benefit of the marvellous modern science of medicine to only some two per cent of the earth's population. He was a fanatic, enormously energetic, very tough, one of those men who influence many and affect their era even if they are kept from fully realizing themselves.

Bozha and Bah-tch had never met him, had only seen him on lecture platforms, but they had all his official reports and had studied them carefully. In a way he almost outranked Oton in their estimation. They did not disagree with me when I said one day that Stampar was probably the most effective man Yugoslavia had produced. He "knew how." Two years before, shortly after discovering they were in love, they had written him about their decision to become doctors, and had

[1] At the end of the book, beginning on page 477, are Notes and Appendices.

received an answer. "Doctor Hercules" expressed his pleasure at their determination to go into medicine and hoped nothing would divert them from becoming "people's doctors."

They prized his letter very much.

Bozha and Bah-tch came to see us off at the station in Lublyana when we took the train for Trieste to return to America. In the next several years we had some letters, notes and cards from them—they usually signed them together. In turn, we wrote them briefly and sent them books and magazines. Occasionally, pressed between the sheets of their notepaper was an edelweis, a field or forest flower, a beech or linden leaf. When we bought a little farm in the Delaware Valley in '37 Stella sent them leaves and blossoms from our place.

They were in Prague then, their second year in medical school. They wrote that the school was so good they had changed their plans somewhat and would stay in Czechoslovakia another year, possibly two; then try to enroll in the Warsaw University. They might not get a chance to study in Russia because Yugoslavia had no diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, and they probably would finish their medical education in Belgrade.

During the summer and fall of the Munich crisis we did not hear from them—did not hear till the following spring after Hitler had seized Czechoslovakia. Then a note came from Warsaw in Bozha's handwriting:

"Do you remember, Stella, how bitterly I spoke to you a few weeks before you and Louis left Yugoslavia? Bah-tch and I feel that way more than ever. Our worst misfortunes are yet to come—our Calvary. I mean Slovenia's, Yugoslavia's, Europe's. . . . Hitler. . . . He is as clever as he is evil. He is getting so strong because he understands the rest of the European rulers and politicians, the Chamberlains and Daladiers, the crowd in striped trousers, all the manipulators of weakness and evil. . . ."

Six months later Hitler attacked Poland. And the next letter came the following Christmas. They had barely escaped alive from Warsaw. They were twenty-three. Bah-tch was due to go into the Yugoslav army service but he would probably be deferred till he got his medical degree. They were at the University of Belgrade and expected to graduate in February '41. "And then—?" But there was no use looking ahead—the war was certain to spread and engulf Yugoslavia and upset every plan.

This was the last letter, but two more postcards came—one from

Bohin (a picture of the lake) in the summer of '40, the other at Christmas the same year from Belgrade.

When Yugoslavia was overwhelmed in the spring of '41 Stella and I kept thinking of Bozha and Bah-tch. Were they in Belgrade that Palm Sunday when the Stukas struck? Or had they already returned to Slovenia?

In the autumn of '41 a number of Yugoslav refugees, having escaped from the Balkans about the time of the invasion, reached New York; among them a family from Lublyana who knew the Zupanchiches and the Ravnikhars. They told us that Bozha, "tiny as ever," and Bah-tch had received their degrees in February. But that was all they knew—except one very significant thing, which concerned more than those two.

That summer of '40, the summer we had received the picture post-card of Lake Bohin, Bozha and Bah-tch had spent their vacation-time with a group of young people in the mountains of Slovenia. They had practiced shooting and had surveyed the more or less inaccessible spots—caves, cliffs, peaks, chasm ledges—which would be advantageous for guerrilla warfare should Yugoslavia be taken over by the Axis with the aid of Prince-Regent Paul's appeasement regime in Belgrade, or should the country be conquered outright.

Several such groups, we were told, had been working all over Slovenia since Hitler's occupation of Austria, which had brought the Nazis within a half-hour's drive of Bohin and Bled. Some of them called themselves the Dead Guards. They were devotees of outdoor sports, young men and girls in their late teens and twenties, students and intellectuals, the sort Bozha must have had in mind when she told Stella about Oton Zupanchich's poem "Advice to My Young Son." They made caches of food, guns, ammunition, rope, clothing, shoes, medical supplies.

In the spring of '42 (through a channel known to appropriate United States officials) I began to get reports of widespread Slovenian guerrilla operations which had commenced, it seemed, eight or nine months earlier both against the Germans, who occupied northern Slovenia, and the Italians, who held the rest of it including Lublyana. A while later news of these operations, as part of the general Yugoslav resistance, started to appear in the American press, datelined Berne and London, where correspondents were getting hold of facts and rumors from various sources.

Stella and I tried to imagine what Bah-tch and Bozha were doing.

Practicing medicine in Lublyana? Hardly. Putting up with Fascist occupation? Tolerating the old-line politicians, several of whom had gone to Rome to be received by Mussolini and the King of Italy? Impossible. The fiber of their characters was such that they were bound to be somewhere with the guerrillas who called themselves Partisans or "the Liberation Front."

In the last half of '42 I continued to receive reports of Partisan operations in the rural, especially the mountainous, regions of occupied Slovenia. In the part of the country held by the Italians there appeared to be some twenty or thirty thousand guerrillas, who were keeping several Fascist divisions busy.

But some of the stories which reached me in December '42 told of the destruction of many Partisan units. In some cases the Fascist army commanders were aided by members of a Slovenian organization called the White Guards, agents of the old-time Slovenian politicians, who for the sake of their own postwar future, could not tolerate the development of this new military-political movement; they preferred to collaborate with the occupation.

There were accounts too of mass executions by the Italian army of whole companies and platoons of seized Partisans; and captured guerrillas were tortured, whether wounded or unwounded, in order to elicit information about other Partisan units. The tortured prisoners usually died.

I learned that Dr. Andriya Stampar was in a Nazi concentration camp in Austria. There was no news of Oton Zupanchich.

Bozha and Bah-tch ——

Glancing through *The New York Times* on January 23, '43, I saw a dispatch by its London correspondent, C. L. Sulzberger, which had to do with guerrilla warfare in Yugoslavia some five months before. In the second paragraph I came upon a reference to "a lady doctor named Ravnikhar." Her first name was not given, but it could only be Bozha. A few days later I received a report through my usual channel which removed all possible doubt and gave some details that had not appeared in Mr. Sulzberger's story.

In midsummer of '42 Bozha was twenty-six years old. She was a doctor in the Slovenian Partisan forces, in charge of a hospital located in a mountain cave. The mouth of the cave was on the brink of a chasm.

One day a large Italian patrol suddenly appeared near her position,

obviously intent upon capturing the cave. She opened fire on the enemy, but soon realized her situation was hopeless.

Bozha stopped shooting and ran into the cave, and before the patrol reached the mouth of it, she killed her Partisan patients who had been wounded in action during the previous weeks. Then she reappeared, paused for an instant on the brink of the chasm, and leapt into it.

This is all that has come out of night-shrouded Slovenia about the incident.

We in America who knew Bozha can only surmise. If she shot her Partisan patients, no doubt they had authorized and even begged her to kill them. They all knew that if they fell into enemy hands they would be tortured for information or be murdered outright. And Bozha must have leapt into the chasm for the same reason.

Perhaps there was also another reason. In the report there is no mention of Bah-tch. Was he among her patients? Or had he and Bozha been separated? Had he been killed before? We in America who knew them can only ask these questions and wait for answers till the war ends.

When the war ends, the larger question will face us all. Bozha and Bah-tch kept their promise as well as they could. But we—shall we let the old manipulators of misfortune, the referees of futility, invalidate their faith, youth and sacrifice? Or shall we give Bozha's leap another meaning—a flight into the future?

A Boy and His Village

WHILE AT BOHIN LAKE THAT SUMMER—1932—STELLA AND I went on long walks over mountain trails. And one morning, crossing a narrow pass between two peaks and heading down into the valley which looked very inviting from the height, we came to a village called Drazhgoshé.

It was one of the larger Slovenian villages: eighty-odd houses with about four hundred fifty inhabitants. An old community. One of the villagers with whom I got into conversation proudly took us into the church to show us the golden Baroque altars which dated back to 1658.

Most of the people were poor, barely making ends meet. But the place was very attractive. There were flowers growing out of pots and boxes on the window-sills of the humblest dwellings. The lunch at the village *gostilna* near the church was good. And everybody we met was excited because we were from the United States. I talked with Drazhgoshani who had relatives in Cleveland and Pittsburgh and on the Iron Range in Minnesota. They asked me eagerly if I knew them.

But the most delightful part of our visit to Drazhgoshé happened as we were leaving. On the road we met a little boy who stopped before us and looked up and smiled. He was about four, sturdy, red-cheeked, with a mop of straw-colored hair—a picture of health. He wore a homespun-linen shirt which had been clean that morning but was no longer, and a pair of patched-up breeches which reached just below his knees. His bare toes were half-drowned in the fine dust of the road.

"Isn't he wonderful!" said Stella in English.

The boy did not understand her words but knew we were delighted with him. A dimple flickered in his cheek.

"What's your name?" I asked in Slovenian.

"Yanezek," he replied.

"Ya-né-zek," Stella repeated a bit awkwardly.

"'Johnny,'" I told her.

The boy evidently knew we were *Amerikantsa.* "My uncle Yanez is in America," he said.

Stella and I looked at him in silence. In his wide-spaced blue eyes was the simple directness of sun and water. He continued to smile—for no reason at all except that he was very much alive.

His gaze swung around: there was a wildflower by the roadside. He reached for it, dusted it off a bit with his chubby fingers, and gave it to Stella. Then in sudden shyness he cried "*Zbogom*!—Goodbye!" and dashed off.

Back at our hotel by the lake, Stella put the flower in a tumbler of water. We spoke of walking to Drazhgoshé again. But somehow we didn't.

Stella took the wildflower out of the glass and pressed it in a book. She still has it. And during the ten years since our brief meeting with Yanezek we have often remembered him, wondering how he was. Stella would say, "He must be about six now," or ". . . eight . . . ten . . . twelve—"

When in the spring of '41 Yugoslavia was overrun by Nazis and Fascists the region including Drazhgoshé came under German occupation. And about fifteen months later I received a report of the destruction by the Nazis early in '42 of the village of Drazhgoshé.

Toward evening on December 31, '41, a sizable band of Slovenian guerrillas, fleeing from sub-zero cold in the high mountains, entered the village and established themselves in various buildings. Although fearful of consequences many of the inhabitants actively aided them.

Nazi troops were billeted in a town some five kilometers away. On January 9th, presumably as soon as they learned the guerrillas were in the village, they opened artillery fire on Drazhgoshé and kept it up for two days, destroying about one-third of the dwellings and outbuildings.

When the firing began, a good many women and small children and a few men left the village and made for the mountains. Their bodies were found when the thaws began in the spring. They had frozen to death in the snow.

But most of the inhabitants remained in the village—perhaps obeying the instinct to defend their homes.

On Sunday, January 11th, the Nazi infantry, supported by tanks, armored cars and a heavy artillery barrage, made a full-scale attack on Drazhgoshé. The guerrillas fought, killing and wounding about a hundred Germans; then, by means of a rear-guard action, they withdrew from the village and escaped into the mountains. With them went many villagers—the men and boys who had fought by their side.

But when the Germans occupied Drazhgoshé some hundred sixty people were still there. The Nazis ordered them to bring out of the houses everything of any value, and to put it on trucks, which then drove off. The golden Baroque altars were torn out of the church walls and taken away. Pigs, cattle and chickens were slaughtered on the spot and loaded on drays.

The emptied houses and barns were then set on fire, blown up with hand grenades, or dynamited.

Anybody who showed the slightest sign of resistance or disapproval, whether man, woman or child, was shot instantly. The village was surrounded by troops; there was no escape.

Women and minor children were herded together—what became of them later the report does not say, except that some were taken into homes in a neighboring town.

All the men and all boys over twelve were driven into the parish-house courtyard and mowed down by machine-guns. The report does not give a definite number of victims, but I gather it was between forty and fifty. Nor does it give the names of any of them.

"Yanezek!" cried Stella when I told her about it.

We have no way of knowing the boy's fate. He might have frozen to death fleeing with others into the mountains or he might have been among those massacred in the parish-house courtyard.

If he is still alive he is about fifteen now. Possibly he escaped from the village with the guerrillas just before the Germans captured it.

I fear that he is dead.

But I hope against hope that he is still alive. In the direct gaze of his blue eyes, in the lyrical grace of the gesture with which he handed Stella the dusty little flower, there was—as in Bozha when we knew her—the essence, the hope of Slovenia.

One Man's Sacrifice

IN COMMON WITH A GOOD MANY OTHER NAMES IN THIS BOOK, HIS name—Milorad Stosich—is not easily pronounced by non-Slavic tongues. But it may be that it will be written into the annals of heroism and self-sacrifice in many languages.

The story of Milorad Stosich is brief and simple—like many stories of ordinary men who suddenly turn hero.

At the high and final moment of his physical existence, Milorad Stosich was twenty-eight. He was earning his living as a night watchman. What he watched, the report—which took over a year to reach me in the United States—does not say.

Tormentingly bare, it tells nothing of his family, or of his boyhood and schooling, or whether he was religious or had a girl friend. I assume he was single.

But attached to the report is a picture of Milorad Stosich which shows a thin young man of medium height. Such people as night watchmen have always found life a meager proposition not only in Yugoslavia but everywhere in Europe, and my guess is that he was more often hungry than well-fed.

Milorad Stosich was anything but handsome—at least by movie-hero standards. There was nothing dashing about him. Shy, self-effacing, always in the background, almost non-existent, he was the sort of fellow no one ever notices, and he might well have evaded the attention even of the alert Nazis.

That he did not is due to an event which evoked something in him that is bigger than the Nazis and their Hitler and everything they stand for. It is something that cannot be put into words. Its potency is one of the forces that will sweep Hitlerism and the evil nonsense about "the master race" off the face of the earth.

Milorad Stosich was a night watchman in the little city of Kranj, which the Nazis made a center of their occupation forces in Upper

Slovenia. The high wooded mountains about the town teemed with guerrillas who made it necessary for Hitler to maintain large garrisons in the valleys.

One morning a German civilian who had come to Kranj with the Nazi army was found dead in an alley. The military promptly seized ten Slovenian hostages, announcing they would be hanged unless the guilty person was turned in or gave himself up within twenty-four hours.

About an hour before the expiration of the term, Milorad Stosich appeared at Nazi headquarters and said he had killed the German. Why had he killed him? He shrugged his thin shoulders and said he just killed him. Had he accomplices? No, he had no accomplices.

The ten hostages were released, Stosich was strung up, then kept hanging in public view for days as an example of what happened to Slovenians who dared to harm a German.

The photograph of Milorad Stosich which I have mentioned shows him dangling from a pole in the main square in Kranj. Below him are three Nazi soldiers, looking disdainful or matter-of-fact, and a young civilian. Round their victim's broken neck is a piece of cardboard with these words in big German letters: "This Slovenian swine acted against the Reich."

A few of the people in Kranj who knew that Milorad Stosich was an extremely mild young man could not believe he had killed the German. A woman maintained he had been the sort of person who could not have swatted a fly. A man insisted Milorad had not been in town the night of the assassination.

They instituted a secret investigation and established beyond any doubt that the night watchman Milorad Stosich had had nothing whatever to do with the killing.

The investigation even determined who the actual killer was. Immediately after the deed he had fled to the mountains to join the guerrillas.

Milorad Stosich had evidently sacrificed himself in order to save the ten hostages. The decision was wholly and solely his own. Why did he make it? The report does not say or even speculate. Nor does it tell who the hostages were. It does say, though, that he probably had not known any of them personally. None recalled ever having had any contact with him. Two or three remembered seeing him around town.

Why did he make the sacrifice? Because some of the hostages had families and he was single? Perhaps. But perhaps, too, in his

humility Milorad Stosich thought they were worth more to Slovenia, to the cause, than he. Possibly he realized that the Germans had brought into the country their "technique of depopulation," as they themselves called it, and were embarked on a systematic job of exterminating the Slovenian nation; and he may have decided it was better for one to die than ten. Perhaps he felt he was helping to postpone the annihilation of his people.

Later the German commander got wind of the fact that Milorad Stosich was not the killer. The Nazis went out to round up the ten hostages whose lives he had saved. They found none. All ten, some with families, had left for the mountains.

The Nazis took ten other men and shot them.

But in the high and beautiful mountains of Upper Slovenia was a band of guerrilla fighters, most of them from Kranj. They called themselves the Milorad Stosich Brigade.

Kraguyevats, Serbia: October 21, 1941

KRAGUYEVATS IS ONE OF THE CHIEF CITIES IN THE REGION popularly known as Shumadiya, in the heart of Serbia. Between the two world wars it was the arsenal of the Yugoslav Army. There were small munitions plants in the city proper; outside it, great store-houses, dumps, barracks, firing-ranges and armament proving-grounds. Because of this, when Yugoslavia collapsed Kraguyevats was one of the first Serbian towns occupied by a large German force. The population then was 16,000.

Unlike elsewhere in Serbia, no considerable guerrilla warfare developed in the vicinity during the spring and summer of '41. In August, though, the little city began to hear of nearby military exchanges between guerrillas and Nazi troops. Also, railway lines running into Kraguyevats were being disrupted.

Late in September Nazi soldiers posted placards throughout the town quoting an order of the German High Command to its commanders in Serbia. The subject of the order was retaliation upon the local population for Germans killed or wounded, no matter how slightly, either in combat with the "criminal" and "Communistic" guerrillas or by "cowardly" assassination. And the order required that for every dead German they shoot one hundred Serbian males "closest at hand and taken at random," while for every wounded German they must execute fifty Serbians.

The order also gave instructions about sniping. If any German was fired at from a Serbian house, whether or not he was hit, the male occupants over fifteen were to be killed on the spot and the dwelling burned; if its walls were stone or brick they were to be leveled by hand grenades or dynamite.

This was said to be Hitler's own order.

All through early October rumors flew about the city of guerrilla attacks upon German occupation forces in Shumadiya.

In the second week in October most of the German army based on Kraguyevats departed in full field equipment for the nearby town of Gornyi Milanovats, to deal with its inhabitants (2,100) who were supposed to be "aiding the Communists."

Gornyi Milanovats was burned and razed. Only the large Orthodox church was left undamaged; why, it is not known. All the people who had not escaped into the guerrilla-held woods were killed. They numbered between seven and eight hundred, and included boys and girls over fifteen.

While most of the German garrison was away about its Nazi business in Gornyi Milanovats, the guerrillas took advantage of the situation near Kraguyevats and attacked the remaining German units, killing ten Nazi soldiers and wounding twenty-six. At any rate this was the number of casualties later claimed by the Germans.

The fighting occurred on October 14th outside Kraguyevats, but no one in the city had any direct or factual knowledge of it. A few people had heard the firing, and rumors were whispered around. The populace was of course sympathetic to the guerrillas, whether they were Chetniks or Partisans—at that time both groups resisted the Germans. But there was then no active cooperation of any kind between the inhabitants and the guerrillas.

Before dawn on Monday, the 20th of October, German soldiers in full war equipment surrounded the city and at about nine o'clock they began to spread through the streets. Proceeding methodically, they took out of every house all the males between fifteen and fifty years of age. They lined them up four deep into groups of two hundred, then marched them to the proving-grounds outside the town.

It was a bleak cool autumn morning.

Lining up in the streets, standing there, and then marching out of the city between files of Nazi soldiers, none of the men and boys could imagine what it was all about. The German soldiers behaved rather well; that is, there was no brutality, no kicking, no pushing around. Most likely none of the soldiers and officers below the rank of major knew what was to come.

The men of Kraguyevats wondered, speculated. Probably the Germans were going to check up to see if they had all the required *legitimatsiyé*—identification cards—and then punish those who hadn't. The men had heard that a few days before, down the line somewhere, guerrilla saboteurs had damaged the railroad; perhaps

the Nazis would make them repair it and possibly do some other jobs. This seemed the most reasonable explanation. Early in October the Germans had discharged all the Serbian workers in the arsenal shops, and there were some three thousand unemployed in Kraguyevats.

So naive were they all that none suspected anything even remotely as evil as what came to pass. Most of them thought: I have not done anything, what can they do to me? . . .

The Germans took the news-vendors and fiacre drivers from the streets. They invaded the gymnasium where classes had begun, and took away Dr. Pantulich, the principal, and all the male professors and instructors, and all the boys from the fifth class on.

Soldiers entered the court-house and took the judges, the accused, the plaintiffs, lawyers and witnesses, the guards and the janitor. Up and down the streets the Nazis gathered up the merchants and their clerks, the restaurant and coffee-house proprietors and their waiters and other male servants, and the artisans and their apprentices.

They took all the Jews who had not previously been removed from the community. The night before a band of *tsigani*—gypsies—had come to Kraguyevats from somewhere; the Germans took all their boys and men between fifteen and fifty, and lined them up with the rest.

They took all the Orthodox priests and the one Catholic priest in town, an exile from the German-occupied part of Slovenia. They picked up about twenty other Slovenian exiles. . . .

This went on all day long. Finally the Germans had about seven thousand men and boys on the proving-grounds; every male to be found in Kraguyevats between fifteen and fifty.

The seven thousand spent the night under the open sky. At least two German regiments guarded them, machine-guns everywhere. The night was cold. Few slept. Some did not even sit down; it was too cold.

What did it all mean?

Many of the men had grabbed a loaf of bread or some other food before leaving home. Most of the school-boys had their lunches. But there was not enough to go around among seven thousand hungry men and boys. Most of the adults had money. In fact, according to custom, some of the Serbians had all the cash they owned in the belts about their waists. Others, after having been lined up in the street, called to their womenfolk to bring them some money: they

did not know where they were going, nor for how long, and did not want to go off penniless. Some had left without breakfast. Now, gathered on the proving-grounds, they asked—through elected committees—to be permitted to send men under German guard to the city for food. Some of the Nazi junior officers were not against this. But they referred the request to their superiors, and were instructed to reject it.

The committees asked for explanations. None were given.

The men began to be afraid. What *did* it mean?

The night grew colder every hour. The Serbians were not allowed fires. Most of them were silent. "I could feel their souls reaching into the long agony of their past history, now repeating itself," wrote a Slovenian in an eyewitness report which reached me a year later. "The boys and very young men acted like their fathers. They too were silent, thinking, feeling the tragedy of the South-Slavic peoples."

As dawn broke on Tuesday the 21st, the question in all minds was: *What will they do with us?*

"A little distance from where I could observe them," continued the eyewitness account, "there was some excitement among the Germans. After a while I began to understand what was going on. Volunteers had been called for to massacre us in retaliation for the ten dead and twenty-six wounded Germans. No one volunteered. So machine-gun crews were detailed to do the job. I saw one non-commissioned officer refuse outright. 'I can't do this,' he said to his superior. 'This is not war. Do what you like with me.' I know German well, and I heard him. It was the only decent thing that happened that day. The officer ordered him taken away. I suppose they shot him.

"The machine-gun crews were distributed down the length of the firing-range. Then the Germans began to count us off into groups of forty.

"*Will they really*—? It hardly seemed possible. But I was afraid to finish the question even in my own mind.

"Some of the Serbians whispered among themselves. They spoke of attempting a stampede through the German encirclement. But who would start it? In which direction? It was clearly a hopeless idea. German soldiers were everywhere, each with several hand grenades, while we had all been searched for weapons.

"What inhibited action more than anything else, however, was that nearly every adult Serbian had a young son in the crowd. We

thought: 'Surely they won't kill us all.' By now we all realized that our being on the proving-grounds had to do with the ten dead and twenty-six wounded Germans. It meant that, according to the posted warning, the Nazis would kill 2,300 of us, about one-third of the seven thousand assembled here. That was terrible enough. But if we tried to stampede the Germans, they might slaughter all of us. . . ."

The groups of forty were marched off. Group after group. One consisted entirely of school-boys, most of whom still carried their books. Dr. Pantulich, their principal and teacher, ran to join them, to march off with them. "If you are going to kill *them*," he cried, "take me too. I want to be killed with them."

Then the execution began.

"The awful, awful song of the machine guns!" wrote the eye-witness. "I thought it was more terrible to have to listen to it than to be killed. Several times they almost included me in a group which was marched off, but each time I was left behind—as though by accident, only God knows why. Perhaps so I should be able to tell about it.

"The commander who issued the order for the massacre (probably after consulting the High Command) was Colonel Fritz Zimmermann. The officer in charge of the actual slaughter was a major.

"The enormous horror of the event is beyond description. You may think that you can imagine it, but you cannot. It overpowered us. All thought of fighting our way out with bare hands, of trying to stampede the soldiers had long since gone. Many of us who had not yet been numbered off into a group fainted away. Some of the German soldiers fainted too.

"When I came to, I was so weak I could barely stand. But I made myself stand; I can't explain why. I was saying to myself, 'Oh God, Oh God, Oh God—' Then: 'I mustn't faint again. I must stay on my feet.'

"Someone suddenly asked, 'Will the world hear of this?'

" 'It must,' a young history professor answered.

" 'But when?' said another. 'Will it hear in time to matter to us?'

" 'It must,' said the young history professor again.

"Then he and the others were marched off.

"The song of the machine-guns burst out every few minutes. *Forty . . . forty . . . forty . . .* Over one hundred gymnasium students

were killed, twelve professors besides their rector, about thirty other teachers, seven Orthodox priests, four judges . . . and *thousands* of others.

"The slaughter went on for two, three hours—I don't know how long. We heard later that an officer informed the major in charge when exactly 2,300 had been killed; the major telephoned somewhere, perhaps to Colonel Zimmermann, then ordered the massacre to continue. After that, they must have stopped counting.

"No one knows the exact number of victims. Probably it can never be determined. One estimate is 3,400, another over four thousand, and still another six thousand. The mayor of the city said that sixty percent of the male population had been killed. That would be approximately 4,500.

"Six hundred men were retained as hostages for future use in case more German soldiers were killed or wounded. They were made to dig huge trenches in which they then had to bury the dead. They worked at this day and night from Wednesday till Sunday.

"When I found myself in Kraguyevats again, I wished I had been killed too. Wailing and moaning came out of every house in the city—the sort of grief-sounds that are heard only in the heart of the Balkans. There was not a home that had not lost more than one man or boy. Some families lost four, five, six ——

"All that week the streets were nearly deserted. The instinct that makes one want to go on living in spite of everything was dim. No one opened any shops, restaurants and coffee-houses. There were almost no men. Every woman I saw wore mourning.

"It is estimated that the men who died had between three and four million dinars on their persons. The Germans robbed them of the money. Then—obviously out of this sum—the officers of the German *Wehrmacht* stationed in and about Kraguyevats donated to the city 250,000 dinars for its poor ——

"The following week a notice was posted on the walls—to the effect that '2,300 Communists and bandits and their supporters' had been killed by the German forces near Kraguyevats. It gave the figure that would have been 'correct' had they killed only a hundred for every dead and fifty for every wounded German, as specified in the order.

"Families were not allowed to seek the bodies of their relatives and bury them separately or with any sort of service. Those who

wanted to were told that 'Communists and bandits and their supporters' were not entitled to formal burial.

"Among the victims were a few Slovenians who had been exiled to Serbia. We are missing twelve. Three days after the massacre, permits to return to Slovenia came for two of them. . . ."

A Dying Guerrilla's Testament

MARKO WAS HIS NAME, AND HE WAS A SMALL-TOWN MAN, still a young man—only a little while before the Axis turned its fury on Yugoslavia, he had married a girl named Yelena who came from a village nearby.

So begins a story people in many parts of Yugoslavia started to whisper among themselves in '42, after the country's far-flung resistance against German, Italian and Magyar occupation had taken a heavy toll of the guerrilla fighters who called themselves Partisans or the Liberation Front.

Sometimes, as the tale was told, Marko was a Serbian; sometimes a Croatian—this was not important to those who whispered it about.

What seemed to matter was that Marko was an honest man; not with any too much schooling behind him, but intelligent and able to say what went on in his head so that one who was even less well educated could understand him. In his spare time when business was slow in his shop Marko used to read newspapers and books and tell others what he read about; and evenings and Sundays he liked to talk politics and philosophy.

That is the sort of man he was, this Marko: of the people, but a little above the average in that he knew the meaning of things and could express his mind and heart in simple, honest words.

Later when the enemy occupied his town and began to seize men for hostages and, worse yet, for slave labor in Germany and Italy and behind the Russian front, Marko told his young wife Yelena, who was with child, to go back to her father's house in her native village and with God's help take care of herself as best she knew how; and he left his home and business, his friends and town, without saying a word to anyone else; and he headed for the mountains

and there joined other men who felt as he did about the things that were going on under occupation.

Marko was a Partisan guerrilla and he fought in one battle after another, now against the Germans, now against the Italians, and sometimes against native dupes and scoundrels who served the Axis puppet governments; and he helped to inflict many casualties on the enemy. He was a great fighter.

But the Partisans' losses also were not small; and one day, in a fierce battle with the Axis, Marko was mortally wounded.

And as he lay on the ground with enemy metal in his torn body, knowing he was bleeding to death and no one could help him, Marko managed to get a little stub of pencil and some paper out of his coat pocket, and he started a letter to his unborn child:

My little one, curled up in the darkness, blind and unbreathing, soft and shapeless, I salute you. Now you are unhurried in the wonderful warmth; but the day of your birth is not far off and you are storing strength. When your moment comes you will be ready. Your mother, whom I love deeply, will have given you everything you need. You will twist and struggle; something within you will fight toward the light and for air, for life—no one knows why. How I wish I could hear your first gasp and see the first blink of your eyelids!

Keep burning, but always under your control, the fire of passion that tempers the steel of your young years and gives them the ring of human worth. Let the flame leap and let it be so clear that in the years of your age, when your work is over, its light will continue to shine in your eyes like a lamp in a dark-framed window, drawing and warming those who stumble in the night and are chill.

Keep your wonder and surprise, your impulse to discover, your eyes on the horizon—they are your promise of immortality. Go through storms, but fix your heart on the sun and stars above them. There is one never-changing rule in the world: dawn follows darkness.

Work as you are able, whatever the task, and keep high courage and firm faith. Do not be ashamed of fear; do not hide it; conquer it. Do not be dismayed when you see others grow tired in this confused world. There is always light around the edges of gloom; strive toward it. Think as you are able. Ponder, decide, act. Never stop the flow of thought and feeling between your mind and your heart. Let your instinct tell you what is right.

As you go on, know what is behind you. I am ashamed to leave you a world of charred hopes, of error piled upon error, blood spilled upon blood. Forgive me. Know the errors of the past, but look ahead—find the stepping-stones to the future, to a clear dawn.

Keep your love of life; but overcome your fear of death. Life is

lost if it is not loved; only never love it too much. Sometimes the best thing a man can do is die.

Keep your joy in friendship, and your anger at what your instinct tells you is wrong.

Keep your pleasure in little things—a snowflake, a blade of grass, a cobweb stretched between two branches of a bush, the sheen of a bird's wing, the moisture in a linden leaf, a girl's smile. They are as big as sunlight and thunder, wind and wave on the ocean, and the greatness of heroes. There is magic in the stillness of a seed——

Vision was going from Marko's eyes; his fingers were numb and he could barely hold the little pencil. He did not finish the letter to his unborn son. In irregular lines at the bottom of the paper he scrawled: "Please deliver this to my wife Yelena," and he placed the letter under his cheek so that his face served as a weight to keep the wind from blowing it away.

When his fellow Partisans found Marko, they read what he had written and they all said, "This is just as I feel." And they all copied it, making it their own letter to their unborn children, ending it themselves with "In thought, as a last benediction, I kiss your forehead," or "Good night to you, my little one—and a bright morning." Then each carried it on his person till he was killed too, and when his fellow Partisans found it on his body they copied it . . . till now every Partisan guerrilla who has a wife with child carries the letter.[2]

It was impossible to deliver Marko's original letter to his wife Yelena, for the village where she lived was in territory which the enemy held with specially strong forces. By-and-by, however, the Partisans penetrated to that region also and liberated it. But when they reached Yelena's village, they found it destroyed. Most of the villagers had been massacred, and Yelena was among the dead.

Marko's child was never born.

But Marko's letter will be read by many a Partisan's child born under Axis occupation. It will be read the world over and some day "a clear dawn" *will* break over the lands of the South-Slavs, over the Balkans, over Europe, over all the earth.

The Nightmare: 1941-'43

Occupation and "the Technique of Depopulation"

As an organized state, Yugoslavia officially collapsed on April 17, '41, when the Yugoslav minister of war and the chief of staff—on the authorization of Premier Dushan Simovich, but without the knowledge of the rest of the government—signed a capitulation agreement with the German command. Within a week the country's partitioning was completed according to Nazi plans worked out perhaps years before.

For his quisling in Serbia proper Hitler picked General Milan Nedich of the Yugoslav Army. An extremely able man and also a tough hombre, a pro-Nazi since '37 when he became convinced that German power was destined to dominate the world, Nedich had no rivals for this position.

Hitler let Bulgarians overrun parts of South Serbia and so-called Yugoslav Macedonia, and he loosed Magyars on Voyvodina.

Interning Croatia's recognized leader, Vladko Machek, who had not gone into exile with the Yugoslav government because he wanted to stay with his people, Hitler let Mussolini make inland Croatia an "independent free state" under quisling Anté Pavelich, who also had no competition for the job. He was a gruesome character whom the Fascists had kept on ice in Italy ever since he organized the assassination of King Alexander in '34.

Germans held Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, and a few other key points in that territory.

Italians were given Montenegro, Dalmatia, a part of Herzegovina and the coast of Croatia.

When the Nazis divided Slovenia, they retained the northern two-thirds, allowing Mussolini to take the southeastern part, which bordered on Italy. In Lublyana, the Duce's general found that the

former governor of Slovenia, Marko Natlachen, and some other leaders of the Slovenian People's (Clerical) Party were ready to get along with the occupation. These pre-invasion "manipulators of evil" and "referees in futility" journeyed to Rome to present themselves to Mussolini and King Victor Emmanuel. They signed a document prepared by the Fascists in which they pledged their "loyalty" to the occupation.

But Hitler's gangsters were the real bosses everywhere in the conquered country, and they knew what they were about. They brought into Yugoslavia—as into Poland, as into Greece, as into the Ukraine and White Russia—an enormous and well-informed cunning and a satanic plan. The stories about Milorad Stosich, the village of Drazhgoshé, and the city of Kraguyevats show part of it in action. Its ultimate purpose was to reduce the population to a point so low that the three Yugoslav national groups, Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians, would not be able to recover after the war; would not be able to reorganize their economic, political and cultural life.

The Nazis brought along their "technique of depopulation."

The Germans were gambling on taking over the Balkans permanently even should they lose the military war. For if "depopulation" were carried out far enough, who else would be left to run the region but the Nazis or their successors? The idea was first of all to decapitate the invaded peoples—liquidate their spiritual heads, their cultural leaders, technical specialists and all the other effective individuals to whom the country might turn for guidance. The Nazis figured the rest would be easy.

But it took the peoples of occupied Yugoslav lands some time to realize the purpose and ramifications of this scheme.

The Gestapo *gauleiters* whom Hitler put in charge of the different sections of the country, including those occupied by Italians, were responsible for "depopulation" operations. They were cleverly chosen. Well versed in existing Yugoslav cleavages, they lost no time in deepening them.

The Serbo-Croatian cleavage, for instance. The Nazis attended to that first of all. In mid-May '41, five weeks before the German assault upon Russia, Heinrich Himmler, the Gestapo chief, called to Berlin one Eugen Kvaternik, quisling Anté Pavelich's top lieutenant in Croatia, and ordered him to stage widespread massacres of Serbians, beginning the 20th of June. Massacres are the most

GERMANY
HUNGARY
RUMANIA
Maribor
SLOVENIA
Ljubljana
Zagreb
Subotica
BACHKA
Sambor
Timisoara
BANAT
Trieste
CROATIA
SLAVONIA
Karlovac
Novi Sad
Fiume
Brod
Belgrade
IRON GATE
Bihac
Banja Luka
BOSNIA
Zara
DALMATIA
Kragujevac
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Ancona
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Spalato
HERCEGOVINA
Nish
MONTENEGRO
Ragusa
Celinje
Prizren
Skoplje
Sculari
ADRIATIC SEA
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Tirana
Bitoli
NAPLES
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Yugoslavia

direct "depopulation" method; but in this case Himmler had an additional purpose. The Nazi High Command feared that when the Germans invaded Russia mass uprisings against them and the Italians might occur all over Yugoslavia, where the people were preponderantly and passionately pro-Russian. To forestall this, Hitler had instructed Himmler "to put a river of blood" between the Serbian and Croatian peoples. The idea was not only to kill off a large number of Serbians but to induce those remaining and the Croatians to hate and fear one another, making impossible any kind of concerted action by them.

Carrying out the Himmler order under continuous Gestapo supervision, Pavelich and Kvaternik massacred late in June and early in July '41 vast numbers of Serbians, allegedly tens of thousands, and destroyed scores of their communities. In this action the Croatian quislings used their own militia, *Ustashi* (rebels), now part of the Axis forces and made up largely of Croatian morons, perverts and ultra-nationalists whom they had mobilized and equipped with Italian and German arms. Among them were also German and Hungarian nationals living in Yugoslav territories.

Kvaternik killed with his own hand over one thousand people—not only Serbians but also Croatians who rose against the Ustashi to protect the Serbians.

These massacres did not dampen the powerful pro-Russian sentiment or prevent a fierce anti-Axis resistance; but they did succeed in causing many Serbians to hate everything Croatian as they had never hated anything before, which of course favored the Nazi-Fascist long-range "depopulation" aims. When the massacres began, tens of thousands of Serbians, for generations in Croatia but now homeless, escaped into quisling Nedich's territory or into the nearest mountains—most of them by the skin of their teeth. Some of the refugees became centers of hatred against everything Croatian.

In northern Slovenia, which consists of Upper Carniola and southern Styria, the Nazis proceeded to carry out another Hitler order: "Make this land German for me!" To create "living space for worthy German families" sent down from the Reich, they systematically uprooted the inhabitants of whole regions. They destroyed many villages to the last house and shed. They separated minor children from parents, sending the former to Germany to be educated as Nazis and the latter into slavery in German war plants. Young women and girls over fifteen were officially designated "free military

maidens" and shipped behind the German lines in Russia—gifts from the Fuehrer to his soldiers, to be enjoyed between bouts with the Red Army. About a hundred thousand Slovenians were forcibly moved into Nedich's Serbia and Pavelich's Croatia to augment the chaos there. Other thousands were killed outright. . . . In this atmosphere, many of the educated and most sensitive went mad or committed suicide; and as early as the autumn of '41, when the country was gutted of most of its food stores and sixty percent of its cattle, people began to die of starvation and of diseases induced by undernourishment.

In Italian-occupied Slovenia, enjoying the cooperation of some of the older Slovenian politicians and officials, the Fascists behaved reasonably well at first. But only for a short while. Then as people like Bah-tch and Bozha, unable to endure the shame of Slovenian submission and cooperation with the enemy on any terms and for any reason, resisted and encouraged others to resist—then the Italians became as brutal as the Germans were elsewhere.

Up to the middle of '43, Nazis and Fascists together leveled to the ground over two hundred towns, villages and hamlets in Slovenia, a land the size of Connecticut with 1,500,000 population.

In many instances Italian officers destroyed Slovenian communities without the slightest provocation on the part of the people. They simply came with their troops, shot everyone in sight, then burned and razed the dwellings. One explanation for this is that they wished to impress Rome and Berlin with the toughness of their current job and thus stall off being sent to fight on the Russian front. Another explanation was advanced by an Italian officer who is quoted in a report that reached me: "The more of these Slavs we kill now, the fewer we will have to cope with later."

The Fascists took some fifty thousand Slovenians for slave labor in Italy. They dumped twelve thousand men, women and children on a barren, uninhabited island off the coast of Dalmatia which had no water supply apart from rain. They sent seventy percent of the Slovenian male students—the potential fathers and future leaders of the little nation—to concentration camps in Italy, where many died of starvation and disease or went insane.

In Bosnia the Gestapo organized the perverts and morons among the Moslems into bands which massacred between eighty and a hundred thousand Christians and Jews.

In Zagreb and other Croatian cities Pavelich's forces, always under

direct Gestapo supervision and inspiration, also went after the Jews, liquidating them almost entirely.

In Voyvodina units of the Hungarian army, commanded by unimaginably bestial Magyar officers coached by Nazi geniuses in barbarity, slaughtered in a few weeks between seventy and eighty thousand Serbians and Jews.

In South Serbia or Yugoslav Macedonia specially organized bands of Bulgarian sadists and hoodlums (the kind you find in every country) perpetrated similar outrages.

Early in '41 about seventy-five thousand Jews lived in Yugoslavia. By the end of '42 they were practically exterminated.

In compliance with Hitler's plan and orders, all that was humanly rotten in the Balkans was brought to the top, welded into an instrument of the "depopulation technique," and then so manipulated as to ravage and destroy what was sound and fine.

All that was humanly sound and fine had to run for its life. It had to begin to figure out ways and means of resisting the rising horror. It found extreme difficulty in retaining sanity.

The best of this latter element became heroic. A Catholic priest named Veslay in Karlovats, Croatia, was one of the early heroes. He filled his parish-house with Jews and Serbians whom the Ustashi wanted to kill.

At the same time, as I shall show in detail later, a large section of the Catholic priesthood in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina which had been pro-Ustashi before the collapse of Yugoslavia supported the pogroms against the Orthodox Serbians. One Croatian bishop protested to the Vatican. So far as I know the Vatican did nothing about it except to donate a sum of money for Serbian refugees who had fled from the Ustashi into Serbia. At least two Croatian bishops, including Archbishop Sharich of Sarajevo, were openly pro-Ustashi.

Early Resistance and the Beginnings of Civil War

WITH THE COLLAPSE OF THE YUGOSLAV ARMY, THE MOUNTAINS of southwestern Yugoslavia filled with armed soldiers and officers who had not surrendered. Most of them were Serbians, some were Slovenians and Croatians. There were whole platoons, companies, battalions. They wanted to keep on fighting, to try to erase their shame over the swift defeat. Who would lead them?

Nearly all the generals had capitulated or been captured; the rest were in airplanes flying into exile. The highest ranking officer at large in the country was Colonel Drazha Mikhailovich, who happened to be in the small and ancient town of Mostar, in Herzegovina's bleak Dinaric Alps. He set out to reorganize the men swarming over the mountainsides.

Mikhailovich was in his mid-forties, a native of Ivanitsa, a village in Shumadiya, the region to which I referred as the heart of Serbia. As is true of all Serbians if one delves far enough into their antecedents, his stock was originally peasant, but his father was a carpenter. His parents died when he was still a lad and he was taken into the family of his father's brother. The uncle, who had been a non-commissioned officer in the Serbian army, arranged for the boy's admission into the state military academy.

People who have known Drazha Mikhailovich at different times since World War I (during which he was a lieutenant in the old Serbian army) describe him as handsome, of medium height, and strongly made. In the middle '30s he graduated from the École Supérieure de Guerre in France. Promoted to colonel in '36, he was assigned to general staff duty. Contrary to one-time widespread publicity on this point, he was never chief of the division of guerrilla warfare—that was another Mikhailovich, a brigadier general, no

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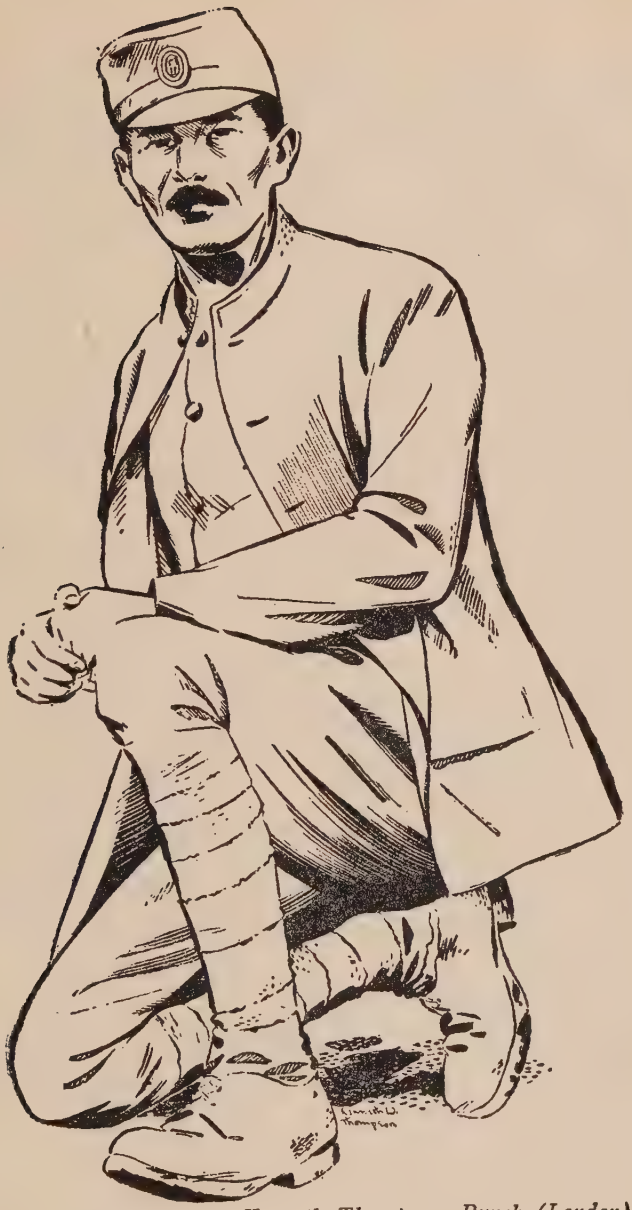
relation to Drazha. The name is as common in Serbia as Mitchell is in America. There were scores of officers named Mikhailovich in the Yugoslav army.

But Drazha Mikhailovich was connected with the division of guerrilla warfare in his capacity as liaison officer between the Yugoslav general staff and a group of British agents in the Balkans. I know the names of several of these British agents; a couple of them I met in Belgrade in '32-'33. Two or three figure in Robert St. John's *From the Land of Silent People* and Ray Brock's *Nor Any Victory,* which chronicle the fall of Yugoslavia. Some were in the military intelligence service. Some specialized in economic imperialism. Some performed in both fields. Their chief was devoted to the interests of the British Empire as underscored by the fact that he was personally knee-deep in Rumanian oil. The Balkans were full of such people from several countries; the British were among the best—they were "gentlemen."

Drazha Mikhailovich received no instructions from the Yugoslav government before its members and their boy-king Peter II flew into exile. Apparently no one thought of him. But there is every reason to believe that at least one of the British agents saw the colonel in mid-April. Robert St. John and Ray Brock name two who were near or in Mostar on approximately that date; if they did not see the liaison officer assigned to them by the Yugoslav general staff, they were negligent in their duty.

There is no proof of the rumor circulating in the best-informed progressive Yugoslav circles in London and New York early in '43 that Colonel Drazha Mikhailovich was ever a paid foreign agent. Personally, I am almost certain that he was not. He was a conventional Serbian patriot; his primary loyalty was to the Yugoslav army and the king. But I don't doubt that in April '41 he began to serve the purposes of British agents who, however, did not represent the Britain, the British people of '41 any more than officials of American sugar firms in Cuba, some of whom may or may not be in the United States military or naval intelligence service, represent the American people or any considerable part of the government in Washington. . . . And of course, Colonel Mikhailovich had motives of his own for the course he took.

The estimates of the number of officers and men he had to work with ranged between fifty and seventy-five thousand, all more or less equipped. The news about them got out early in July '41 through British channels; it electrified the anti-Axis world.



By Kenneth Thompson—Punch (London)

Drazha Mikhailovich

At the same time, resistance was developing in the civilian population in most parts of Yugoslavia. In those early days, it was especially strong in the mountainous regions of western Serbia, through rural Montenegro, in eastern Bosnia, and along the coast of Croatia. In Lublyana anti-Axis bombs exploded the third day after the Italians took the city over.

During May-June '41 most of the guerrilla warfare was patternless and very mixed in purpose. Many small armed bands sprang into existence to kill Germans and Italians and quisling troops and to sabotage bridges and trains and rail tracks. But other bands were organized partly or wholly to take advantage of the widespread disintegration of civil authority and get even for something or other with some official of the former Yugoslav state, some peasant or merchant, or family or whole community. Several of these free-lance marauding outfits had been covertly inspired by German "tourists" who had preceded the actual invasion. Some bands were even led by native agents of the Gestapo.

The aim of the enemy was to tangle people's feelings and viewpoints, and to set them to killing each other even at the risk of having an occasional Nazi slain. The aim was to turn as much of the resistance as possible upon itself and thus tie it to the "technique of depopulation."

Small-scale fighting, mainly guerrilla forays against the occupation interspersed with revenge-motivated assassination, developed first, as I say, in Serbia proper. There quisling Nedich was busy trying to establish his authority with the aid of the Nazis and the well-to-do *tsintsari*—an unprincipled, opportunistic urban element notorious in Serbia, mostly descendants of pre-Slavic Balkan natives called Tsintsari, but including also renegade anti-Semitic Jews, and people of mixed Turkish, Greek, Jewish, Albanian and Slavic strains.

Another early group in the resistance picture were the ultra-nationalist pan-Serbian Chetniks, who received generous but uninformed publicity in the American press in March '41 and later in the books by Robert St. John and Ray Brock. Actually this outfit along with the marauding bands was more on the unsound than the healthy side.

The Chetnik tradition is mixed. *Chetnichka Aktsia,* the Chetnik Action, was started in 1902 by a group of wealthy Belgrade Serbians who feared that the Bulgarian *comitadji* operating against the Turks in Old Serbia and Macedonia were getting the jump on them and

By Frans Masereel
From El Libro Negro: Del Terror Nazi en Europa

"Technique of Depopulation"

assuming leadership of the liberation movement in that territory. They sold their idea to the Belgrade government which then unofficially supported the Chetniks (literally: troopers); and for about ten years their function was largely liberating, with carpetbagging as a sideline. By 1913, however, carpetbagging edged out liberating. As I shall explain, the Chetniks entered the service of the dominant group in Belgrade and terrorized both the rich Turks and their Slavic subject population.

By '41 the movement had largely played out its role. A part of it—the so-called *stari* (old) Chetniks—was extremely chauvinist, full of wind, fantastically romantic, virtually crackpot. Aside from a few American journalists and tourists and the British agents looking around for groups they might use after the Axis seized the country over, no one took it seriously. Just before Hitler attacked Yugoslavia, the Chetniks, strutting around in their theatrical uniforms, boasted what they would do to him if he tried to invade. The day the Nazis took Belgrade the outfit as a whole broke up, and many of its members attached themselves to the quisling regime in Belgrade. Their leader, a blustering dodo named Kosta Pechanats, was among the first to desert the organization and go over to quisling Nedich. But some of his former followers stayed more or less on the anti-Nazi side. They joined Mikhailovich as soon as they heard of him. Subsequently world publicity began to apply the term "Chetnik" to the Mikhailovich forces, although at the time there was still no connection between the latter and the traditional Chetnik guerrillas and marauders.

There was a third organized resistance movement. It began in May '41 largely under Communist leadership, but with Hitler's invasion of Russia it spread through the grass roots of Yugoslavia. Groups of fighting men sprang up everywhere. They included Leftists of many shades, intellectuals and idealists, students, liberals, democrats, pan-Slavists, Catholic socialists and progressives; people who had been in opposition to the Belgrade regime for from ten to twenty years and had been seeking new approaches to the Yugoslav problems. Among them were also ex-Loyalist fighters in Spain as well as assorted social misfits. The rank and file was preponderantly non-Communist, which, however, is not saying anti-Communist. It was one-hundred-percent pro-Russian.

These units presently became known under the general label of Partisans. They were a kind of minutemen.[3]

At first they had no central command. Most of the leaders lacked

military ability. Politically, however, they were pretty clear. Perhaps a majority of the commanders were Communist revolutionists who regarded as their enemy not only the Nazis and Fascists and their quislings, but also the native bourgeoisie, the better-off peasants, and —potentially—Colonel Drazha Mikhailovich and his forces. To them, Mikhailovich represented the official Yugoslavia that had persecuted Communists and other Leftist and opposition elements for twenty years.

Not that they held him responsible for that persecution. But to most Partisan leaders, Communist or not, Colonel Mikhailovich was a probable means of ensuring that the government-in-exile, which had established itself in London and which included a number of old-time reactionaries and nineteenth-century liberals with fourteenth-century hangovers, would be returned to power after the war.

Partisans of all political shadings, whether leaders or rank and file, were out for a new deal for South-Slavic countries and the rest of the Balkans. But they were willing to fight beside Mikhailovich against their common enemy. In September '41 one of their leaders, Tito, who about that time became the Partisans' commander-in-chief, made strenuous efforts to cooperate with him.

Mikhailovich, however, was not willing for many reasons which will appear later. Here let me point out that the majority of the Partisans were not his kind of people any more than he was their kind of man. A good many had radical ideas which went against his grain. Some were Communists. He regarded himself as a patriot. And he was under the influence of British agents who had promised him aid and who he knew were anti-Communist and afraid of Bolshevism in the Balkans. In the summer and fall of '41 he was not anti-Russian but he thought he had to be careful to keep clear of collaboration with these Leftists. Besides, what right had they to compete with him in resisting the Axis? As the highest ranking officer at large, he was the official commander of Yugoslav resistance. Some of his lieutenants felt the same way. In fact a few felt even more strongly about the Partisans. Two or three of them had been closer to the leading British agents in the Balkans than Mikhailovich. They were definitely anti-Russian and anti-Communist, and considered a Communist almost anyone who was not with them all the way through.

A few of these Mikhailovich lieutenants, who gradually eclipsed him in importance, had engaged in small battles against the Partisans as early as June '41. These conflicts, fought by growing numbers of

men, continued intermittently through the rest of '41, all through '42, and at least during the early months of '43.

Thus, within the general resistance against the Axis, a civil war developed with far-flung international implications and complications. But for nearly a year and a half after the occupation of Yugoslavia scarcely anyone outside the country knew what was happening there.

For a year and a half Drazha Mikhailovich was widely publicized in Britain and the United States as outstanding among the Allied military leaders in World War II. Crediting him with the organization and leadership of Yugoslavia's amazing resistance, the press and the radio put him in a class with Chiang Kai-shek, Timoshenko and Douglas MacArthur. Although no war correspondent had seen him or any part of his forces, he was glamorized into a heroic legendary figure—a bold Balkan superman defying the monstrous Axis from his craggy mountainsides, hacking at its forces and installations by night and by day.

American and British short-wave broadcasters talking to occupied countries made much of Drazha Mikhailovich and his Chetniks.

It was all publicity; a hoax perpetrated by specially interested British agents, who were part of a reactionary clique in the War Office, and the Yugoslav government in London.

Perhaps the shining legend, the artificially created brilliance cloaking the man, served a useful Allied purpose for a while, back in the summer and fall of '41 and during the ensuing winter. It stimulated the spirit of resistance in other occupied countries and helped to keep up British and American morale through a period of continuous bad news. But it also helped to screen the whole centuries-old tragedy of South-Slavic peoples that now in a sort of nightmarish climax began to spin around the name which most non-Slavs found somewhat difficult to pronounce.

The Mikhailovich legend began to crack in the summer of '42 when Communist papers in Russia, Britain and America suddenly took to featuring news stories, approved if not inspired by the Soviet Government, insisting that this favorite of the other United Nations was pro-Axis. The dispatches startled most non-Communists who chanced to see them, and perhaps even some Party readers; for as late as June '42 American Communist organizations had sponsored mass meetings in New York and Pittsburgh glorifying the Yugoslav resistance and its great leader.

Was this another of those Balkan puzzles that pop up every once in a while to baffle non-Balkanites? Or was it a riddle contrived by enigmatic Russia—for any one of several reasons? Could Mikhailovich be two things at once: pro-Axis in Soviet eyes and a great patriot in British and American eyes? Could the accusation be true, somehow, from the Russian or Communist angle?

The Partisans and Mikhailovich

ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN COLONEL DRAZHA MIKHAILOVICH'S UNITS and Axis troops, including quisling Pavelich's gangs, started in June '41. Some of the battles involved thousands of men on each side. Whether Mikhailovich or Axis commanders provoked the earliest encounters is not clear from the information before me. My guess is that many of them just happened. There is no doubt, though, that from the outset Mikhailovich's idea was not so much to kill a few score or a few hundred of the enemy day by day as to hold and improve his positions, or to open passage to some strategic objective, a rail junction or bridge, which he wanted destroyed not merely for the sake of destruction but for some valid military reason.

Mikhailovich's chief aim was to prepare Yugoslavia's population for the day when the big Western anti-Axis powers, Britain and America, should finally be ready to invade Europe. In this he was a patriot, according to one way of looking at it, a way which coincided with the British agents'.

Beyond and through that, Mikhailovich's purpose unquestionably was to help restore to power the Karageorgevich dynasty in the person of the boy-king who was the main prop of the government-in-exile clique of reactionary oldsters to whom the Partisans objected. As an officer, Mikhailovich had sworn loyalty to the crown.

This does not mean that Colonel Mikhailovich was not killing Nazis, Italian Fascists, and quisling troops right along, at least from June '41 straight through the summer of that year. He can be credited with thousands of Axis casualties. But he was a trained, disciplined officer; the kind that lost France in two weeks and Yugoslavia in ten days. This fact cannot be too heavily stressed in any consideration of Drazha Mikhailovich in the early phase of his career as a world-publicized figure. His mind worked in terms of timing, objectives and results, advantages gained and disadvantages parried. As an

orthodox soldier, trained in the same French school that had produced Gamelin, and never having gone beyond it, he felt only contempt and revulsion for Partisan operations. They were not based on cold, carefully assembled military intelligence, nor closely calculated to achieve concrete gains at the least cost. Their chief immediate aim was to kill as many Germans, Italians and satellites as possible. And Mikhailovich believed that one of the main purposes in the minds of many Partisan commanders was to help hard-pressed Russia.

Two divergent military aims and tactical ideas came into sharp conflict: deliberate, professional holding back and preparing for the Anglo-American invasion *versus* spontaneous all-out killing of the enemy right now with whatever kind of weapon was at hand. The differences in military viewpoints acquired strong political and ideological overtones. And these military and political differences, with which the purposes of the British agents were not unconcerned, motivated the first stages of the civil war that developed within the Yugoslav resistance to the Axis occupation. Eventually politics and tactics got so mixed up as to be indistinguishable.

What was going on in Yugoslavia was not only war and civil war, it was also revolution and counter-revolution: the future *versus* the past.

Mikhailovich represented the past. He was a legitimist. The situation in which he found himself in the early summer of '41, with an army under his command, was wide open. The government had fled; in a sense, as we shall see later, it had shamefully deserted the country. Not having received any instructions, he had immense freedom to make decisions, to do things on his own. But it was not in him to welcome the situation and seize the opportunity to act. That he left to the Partisans who saw occupied Yugoslavia as the testing ground for native forces and who were out to meet the test. They had some ideas. Mikhailovich had none beyond a blinkered military vision.

As soon as he could, Mikhailovich reported to the government-in-exile. And since the exile was in London he thought it necessary to work closely with what he thought were London's representatives. They were keeping him in touch with his superiors. They would help him, help his country, as soon as possible. . . .

Mikhailovich's whole personality and training were geared to the acceptance of authority. And those in positions commanding his respect, those from whom he would take orders, belonged, like him,

to the past. He was the Number One representative in Yugoslavia of the *status quo ante,* which was over and done with and dead.

Mikhailovich kept on reporting to the Yugoslav government through the British agents . . . and in his communiqués, back in the summer of '41, he commenced to refer wrathfully to the Partisans as "bandits," "criminals" and "hoodlums," much as Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek used to apply these epithets to the revolutionary armies commanded by Communists in the Chinese Civil War a few years earlier. That war too was also revolution and counter-revolution: the future *versus* the past.

But actually Drazha Mikhailovich did not consider the Partisan "bandits" and "criminals" hopeless as military material. Certainly not all of them. During the summer of '41 in his reports to the Yugoslav government-in-exile he put himself on record as bemoaning the fact that he was forced to fight the "Communists" or Partisans; forced by them—they were attacking him. From August '41 to March '42, he repeatedly appealed to his official superiors in London to prevail on the Soviet government to make the Partisans behave; that is, to order them presumably through the Comintern to join his forces. He was assuming that the Soviet was behind the Partisans. Most of their commanders were Communists, he said; some with records in the Spanish war, in which they had served under Soviet commissars.

For a time the Partisans were ready, in fact eager, to enter into a cooperative pact with Mikhailovich. But nothing was further from their thoughts than merging with him and submitting to his orders. This was especially true after September '41 when their separate units accepted Tito as commander-in-chief and began to assume the shape of an organized people's army.

Tito's real name was Josip Brozovich. In '41 he was in his early fifties; a Croatian, a former metal worker in Zagreb. People in America who know him describe him as a man of medium size, blue-eyed, blond, with a homely face but a very attractive smile and a pleasant manner.

During World War I he served for a while in the Austro-Hungarian army. On the Galician front, in 1915, he went over to the Russians along with thousands of other South-Slavs. The October Revolution in '17 freed him from military imprisonment and, joining the Red forces, he fought for three years in the Russian Civil War.

By Farnsworth—From Punch (London)

Freedom on the Heights

Returning to Croatia in '23, he became a labor leader. The Belgrade regime of King Alexander could not buy him; so he got five years in prison on the charge that he was a Communist.

In '28 the Yugoslav secret political police captured Djuro Djakovich, a Bosnian coal miner who was the head of the underground labor movement led by the Communist Party in Yugoslavia, and tortured him to death. A year later, Brozovich came out of prison and took his place. He assumed the name of Tito, and for a long time King Alexander's political police could not find out who he was.

During '29-'39 he visited Russia several times and made friends with Stalin and other Soviet leaders who came to regard him as an able and farsighted man. He was generally credited or blamed for keeping the Leftist labor-movement underground going in Yugoslavia through the terror period of King Alexander's dictatorship.

Reports by the press early in '43 that Tito served in the Spanish Civil War were erroneous. He was busy fighting reaction in Yugoslavia. And his twelve years as the leader of the most active underground in the country were excellent training for his function as the Partisans' commander-in-chief.

Under Tito, the military skill of Partisan officers improved swiftly. Their operations grew steadily more effective. Tito and his lieutenants believed in action, in immediate, day-by-day resistance, paying no heed to direct consequences to themselves or to others. They felt there was no alternative.

Quite apart from any other consideration, the tactic of day-to-day fighting was demanded by the situation in which the Partisans found themselves. It alone could keep going a hating, spontaneously assembled army. If it idled around, waiting for the Anglo-American invasion, some of the guerrillas would be bound to vent their hate in crime; that would break down the morale of the whole organization.

Tito seemed to feel as early as September '41, when he made his first proposal for Partisan-Chetnik collaboration, that unless Mikhailovich's units started continuous fighting they would degenerate like the French army under Gamelin behind the Maginot Line. Tito seemed sure that unless Mikhailovich followed the Partisan example, his reorganized Yugoslav army units, which were being infiltrated by Chetniks with their mixed tradition, would unavoidably turn to reaction, free-lance looting, atrocities, collaboration with the enemy.

A fierce spirit of resistance prevailed in the country at large, driving people to action. Axis terror was driving others into the moun-

—Daily Worker (New York)

The Partisans

tains where there was nothing to do but fight. All these people, thought Tito, should be intelligently organized so as to wreak the greatest possible havoc on the enemy. Although he had nothing in common with Mikhailovich apart from being in the same terrible boat with him, he was willing to become his partner. He tried to convince him of the need of such a partnership. As we shall see, he failed. Mikhailovich demanded submission, which was to say acceptance of his tactics.

So all that Tito could do was to keep his own outfits constantly moving and fighting. And this was in line with his other motives: to kill as many of the enemy as possible, to win the support of the people, to help hard-pressed "Mother Russia," all of which was indirectly also helping Britain and America and all the other allies.

Partisans fought and killed and died. They sacrificed themselves. Action, daring and self-sacrifice stir the imagination and the heart. More and more people—men and women, boys and girls—joined their units. They hated the Axis and all its works, and had within them traditional or direct compulsions to fight occupation wherever they could get at it. They were the soundest elements of the various regions and national groups. Some, to repeat, had no choice but to go into the woods and mountains. If they stayed in their home communities, they would have been killed, or—worse—morally destroyed by being forced into collaboration with the Nazis, Fascists and quislingists.

Reading the reports about them which began to reach me late in the summer of '42, I was certain that without the support of the people in general and the peasants in particular the Partisan units would not have been able to maintain themselves and could not have fought terrific battles with Germans and Italians, many of which world publicity credited to "Mikhailovich's Chetniks." In '43 a report reached me that mentioned one way in which the people had helped the Partisans at harvest time the year before. Most peasants in Slovenia put a few sacks of potatoes at the edge of their fields or under bushes before going home in the evening. In the morning the sacks were gone; the Partisans had come and picked them up.

Mikhailovich fought his last battle against the German and Italian troops in October '41. Then, as Tito had foreseen, his army began to decline in more ways than one. Under carpetbagging Chetnik

leaders criminality broke out and reaction set in. Mikhailovich lost control of some of his units.

Until February '42 all of Montenegro except its two main towns, Cetinyé and Podgoritsa, strongly garrisoned by Italians, was under the Partisans. They fought the Italians and the Chetniks commanded by a Mikhailovich officer, Major Bayo Stanisich, who had begun to attack them in December '41. Then Stanisich, authorized by Drazha Mikhailovich, collaborated with the Fascist commander of Montenegro, and together they overcame the Partisans in several sections of the country, forcing the remnants of their units into the highest mountains. Major Stanisich rounded up some twenty thousand Montegrins, mostly young men and women, and turned them over to the Italians who killed about five thousand and herded the rest into concentration camps in Albania. Montenegrin Partisans reoccupying some of the regions in May '43 found many towns and villages completely destroyed and depopulated. Near the town of Kolashin they came upon eight hundred graves of young men whom, according to eyewitness statements, the Mikhailovich-Stanisich Chetniks had massacred on suspicion of pro-Partisanship.

Similar Chetnik atrocities were perpetrated in scores of other places in Yugoslavia during '42.

Because of them, officers and men of the Yugoslav army deserted Mikhailovich's units wholesale; many went over to the Partisans.

The messages from Mikhailovich to the Yugoslav government in London which I have seen hint of this crisis in his affairs. In one of them he said, "If you know God, help me!" He meant that the Partisans were getting the best of him in spite of the fact that he had Axis help.

But all his communications were obviously censored by British agents either in Yugoslavia or in London or both before they were delivered to the refugee government. Or Mikhailovich wrote them in fear of his British friends, who were actually his captors.

Most of the messages that I saw concerned the Partisans. He never denied that they were inflicting casualties on the German, Italian and quisling forces; the Partisans claimed tens of thousands—twenty thousand in the spring of '42 alone. But Mikhailovich was not impressed by this. It was irregular, a result of operations not under his command. He insisted over and over again that most Partisan warfare was pointless and dangerous in the long view—horrible in its consequences.

Anti-Guerrilla Guerrillas

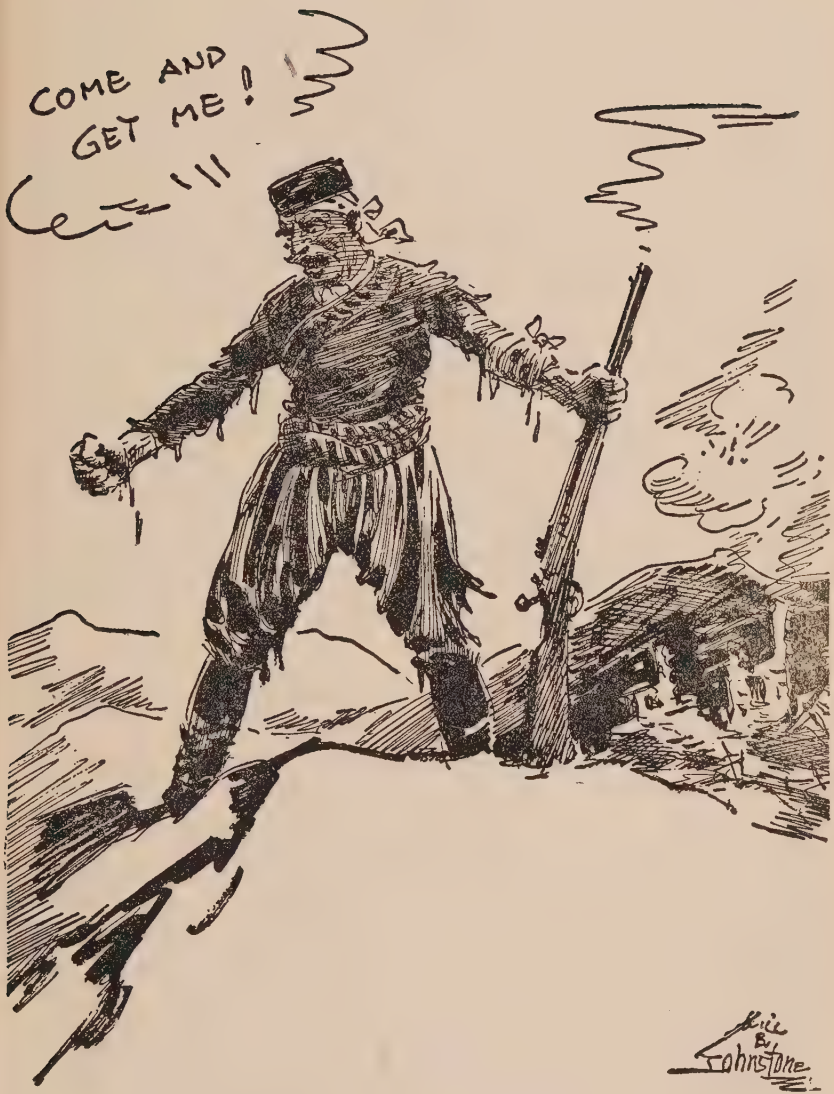
FROM ONE POINT OF VIEW, THE DIRECT CONSEQUENCES OF THE Partisan and other non-regular guerrilla attacks on the Germans *were* horrible. The question is: can those consequences be blamed on the Partisans? Would they or their equivalent not have befallen the peoples of Yugoslavia on other pretexts?

As indicated in the account of the Kraguyevats massacre, not all German soldiers were beasts through and through, and even the most bestial among them could mow down row after row of civilians more easily if given a reason for mass executions—such as retaliation for guerrilla assaults on Nazi detachments.

At first the *gauleiters* ordered the death of one or two hostages for every slain German; then five . . . ten . . . fifty . . . a hundred. Finally they ordered massacres or deportations of whole communities near which guerrillas had attacked occupation garrisons. In the fall of '41 mass executions took place not only in Kraguyevats and Gornyi Milanovats, but in a number of other Serbian towns: Nish, Uzhitsé, Smederevo, Shabats, Kralyevo. The exact number of victims in the first three is not known as I write; in Shabats it was 2,100 and 2,540 in Kralyevo.

The Nazi horror in Serbia and Upper Slovenia—like the later Fascist horror in Lower Slovenia, in Dalmatia, Montenegro and Herzegovina, and along the Croatian coast—became so inhuman and vast, so far beyond experience in its scope and character, that to some people it came to seem like an elemental force, a withering storm impossible to resist. They feared it; but what could they do about it? So here and there, in their supreme bewilderment, ordinary civilians turned on those who to all appearances provoked it—on the Partisan guerrillas, the "bandits."

But this was by no means widespread. It is worth noting because it happened enough times during '41-'42 to be called a tendency,



—*New York World-Telegram*

and because the fact that such things did occasionally occur entered Mikhailovich's explanations of his anti-Partisanism. The psychology of this development may indeed be worth looking into.

The average person in Yugoslavia is naturally pro-Russian. It is the Slav in him. The run-of-the-mill Croatian, Slovenian or Serbian is all for Russia even if he is more or less anti-Communist. If he belongs to the majority of people in the sense that he is poor and usually in a plight and therefore has no good reason to be anti-Communist, he is fiercely pro-Russian. This was true before the war. It became doubly so from June '41 on. Russia was bearing the brunt of Hitler's attack. Even when withdrawing, Russians were killing a hundred times more Axis troops than all the other Allies combined. And what could be more attractive to people living under Nazi or Fascist occupation than Russia, the one power on earth that was killing great masses of German and Italian soldiers?

On the part of many Partisan guerrilla leaders one motive for engaging the Germans and Italians in warfare was, as I have said, to help as quickly as possible to relieve pressure on the Russian front by killing Axis soldiers and keeping Axis divisions away from the Red Army. This was certainly true of those Partisan leaders who were Communists and to whom the survival of the Soviet Union was the prerequisite of any sort of future that interested them. To them everything else was, for the time being at least, of secondary importance.

The plain villager or small-town dweller, however, slowly realizing that the greatest power in Europe had sentenced his nation to something resembling extermination, could not in every instance think first of what was good for Russia, no matter how pro-Russian he might be. Nor in his panic could he always distinguish between Partisans who were honestly anti-Axis and those few who were hoodlums or criminals. All-important to him was that the Axis depopulation experts were wiping out whole villages and towns; that in Kraguyevats over four thousand men and boys had been killed in one afternoon; and that *his* community—*his* house, *his* family—might be next if the guerrillas continued to provoke them.

In this fearful situation, toward the end of '41 some peasants organized into anti-Partisan guerrilla bands—while at the same time many others were joining the Partisan or Mikhailovich outfits. And in some instances in Serbia this anti-Partisan movement, being

essentially appeasement, was aided by quisling Nedich's snakes-in-the-grass, Gestapo stool-pigeons and *agents provocateurs.*

One can call this appeasement—now a word of contempt to most people in America and England. But that is an over-simplification. It was a natural but unthinking attempt at direct self-preservation. Around it swirled the whole nightmare. Behind it was something primitive, perhaps analogous to human urges in the dimness of history when, in extreme dread of things beyond their control and comprehension, men turned on one another, to the slaughter of those closest to them, to human sacrifice, in order to propitiate the elements, to divert the non-human wrath.

Late in '41 and early in '42 this impulse drove some people in parts of Serbia into battle against groups with whom they were more closely linked in interests and general intent than with anyone else under the sun. Peasant anti-guerrilla guerrillas killed many Partisans. Some they captured and tortured—not because Serbians and other South-Slavs are unnaturally cruel or inhuman, but because in their agony and desperation these people could think of checking massacre reprisals only by discouraging guerrilla operations against their common enemy.

But stronger than the appeasing tendency of the anti-guerrillas and Mikhailovich was the tendency to fight the enemy at any and all costs.

The Men in Striped Trousers and the Soldier

IN THE AUTUMN OF '41 AND THE EARLY WEEKS OF THE FOLLOWING winter, it occurred to me repeatedly on the basis of reports and rumors emanating from London that the dominant members of the Yugoslav government-in-exile were secretly uneasy about Drazha Mikhailovich. They could not help knowing that he was in part a tool of British military agents who were in charge of Yugoslav matters mainly because they had lived in Yugoslavia, had been in business there, and were supposed to know something about the country. At that time the British Foreign Office, while perhaps uneasy about them, was not yet opposed to these special military agents who had Mikhailovich under their thumb, and the Ministry of Information did all it could, with the eager cooperation of the inner clique of the government-in-exile, to blow him up into a hero and a legend, attributing to him battles fought and won by the Partisans.

But was Mikhailovich safe? That question had the inner clique on pins and needles. Would he play along with them and the British, or would he strike out to become a leader in his own name?

Who was he anyhow? As late as November '41, in a speech prepared by the inner clique, King Peter referred to him as "lieutenant-colonel." Who was this Drazha? For some months no one in London really knew—except a few people in the British military intelligence who were not saying anything; not even to the Serbian minister who was a member of the inner clique and had long been an agent of British agents. This lack of information was terribly disconcerting to the leading members of the refugee regime, for Serbian officers had a revolutionary-patriotic tradition which had been created by the Black Hand, a one-time secret military society headed by a fierce and able character, Colonel Dragutin Dimitriyevich.

Dimitriyevich, also known as "Apis," had engineered the assassination of King Alexander Obrenovich and Queen Draga in 1903 and eleven years later had assisted in the extremely consequential assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian thrones, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The Black Hand had been stamped out in '17 by the late Premier Pashich and King Alexander Karageorgevich; but who could be sure that some of its sympathizers had not survived the

By Sam Hill, New York Daily Worker

A Communist Caricature of Mikhailovich

purge? Who could say that this Drazha Mikhailovich whom they and the British were building up into a great man wasn't a potential "Apis" with ideas and purposes of his own?

And if not—if he were just an ordinary officer, who could say what his new position in the disrupted country was doing to him psychologically? Was world publicity (if he realized the extent of it) going to his head? Would his officer's oath to the king hold? . . .

By the end of December '41, however, they succeeded in checking up on Mikhailovich. They found out that he was politically harmless

to them, faithful to the throne and dynasty—a good but dumb soldier. He came from an innocuous family which had played no part, nor even taken any interest, in the turbulent and glorious period of Serbia's history from 1804 to 1914. Before '41 he had lived for his army job and his wife and children. Military strategy and tactics had been his chief preoccupation. His motto was: "For king and country!"

So, having taken his measure as a man and being sure of their ground, and anxious to warm themselves in a larger share of the glow of the Mikhailovich legend, the inner group got the boy-king to make him a general and appoint him minister of war in the government. And in the latter capacity they made him the government's sole representative in Yugoslavia. He was empowered to commandeer and confiscate property, to execute individuals within his reach who were objectionable to the regime-in-exile or to him personally, and to issue lists of proscripted individuals beyond his reach, calling upon "patriots"—that is to say, persons in sympathy with him and his government—to execute or assassinate them when opportunity offered.

In this move the inner clique of the Yugoslav government had the cooperation of the official Britain represented by the military intelligence men to whom I have been referring, and who in August or September '41 had sent to Mikhailovich a wireless apparatus in charge of some of their men. Although his inferiors in rank, these British officers became in a very real sense Mikhailovich's superiors, almost his captors. To communicate with his own government, he could use the apparatus only through them; while the government-in-exile could send him only messages passed by the British censor, who in such instances acted for the British Foreign Office and/or the Ministry of Information.

During the writing of this book a British official nodded in a private conversation when I said that London had made "a serious mistake" by cooperating with the Yugoslav government in appointing Mikhailovich minister of war and its sole agent in Yugoslavia. And he did not seem to object when a moment later I changed the adjective from "serious" to "idiotic."

The mistake resulted in grave complications within the United Nations. It was extremely late when early in '43 the British Foreign Office, which apparently had always felt somewhat dubious about Mikhailovich, finally got around to trying to correct it.

Beginnings of World War III?

REPORTS COVERING DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE YUGOSLAV nightmare started to reach me in the summer of '42, about a month after my attention had been drawn to the dispatches branding General Mikhailovich a "pro-Axis traitor" which were being featured in the *Daily Worker*, the leading American Communist paper, published in New York. The general press in the United States and Britain gave as yet no hint of the real situation. Nor for a long time after. The publicity was still only about "Mikhailovich's resistance. . . . Mikhailovich's heroism . . . Mikhailovich . . . Chetniks . . . Chetniks . . . Mikhailovich."

The *Daily Worker* stories were usually datelined Moscow or Ankara. Their source was ICN—Inter-Continent News, a daily mimeographed news service issued in New York City.

ICN was started shortly after Hitler's attack on Russia, and it kept a steady focus on her epic military performance. It contained news items and signed articles by military and political analysts, mostly Russians. And there was much detailed information not available elsewhere about such conditions in Axis-occupied lands as affected Russia at war.

Most of the material appeared simultaneously or a little earlier in the Moscow *Izvestia* and *Pravda* and other Russian papers. There was every indication that ICN was connected with Tass, the Soviet government's official news agency. Tass and ICN correspondents in various parts of the world may or may not have been identical; their work was the same in content and spirit, often word for word. To advance the cause of the Soviet Union was their sole motivation.

All this clearly indicated that the Soviet government was anti-Mikhailovich.

Some ICN dispatches merely denounced Mikhailovich in general terms. Others were very specific. All were based on broadcasts from

the "Free Yugoslavia" short-wave radio station of "The Supreme Command of the Partisan Army" heard in Moscow and Ankara.

One of these dispatches, published in mid-July '42 but based on the Free Yugoslavia broadcast of June 16th, told of a conference of "Partisan leaders from Montenegro, Boka Kotorska and Sandjak," held somewhere in Montenegro late in March, a week or so after the last of Mikhailovich's attacks on the Partisans in Montenegro and in the wild territory known as Sandjak. The conference adopted a declaration directly impugning the patriotism of Drazha Mikhailovich, minister of war of the Yugoslav government-in-exile, accusing him and his lieutenants of treasonable collaboration with the invaders of Yugoslavia and with quisling Nedich, and claiming that for a year most of the resistance to the Axis had come not from his so-called Chetniks but from the Partisans, who were conducting a far-flung struggle for the liberation of South-Slavic nations.

"In this struggle," said the declaration, "our people succeeded in freeing large sections of territory. But precisely when the occupation was experiencing the greatest difficulties it found allies among the traitors headed by Bayo Stanisich, Gregory Lachich and Pavlé Djurichich," all three officers of the Yugoslav army serving under Mikhailovich, who had ordered them to "carry on armed struggle against our people," that is, against the Partisans and their supporters and sympathizers. "Receiving his aid for this purpose, [Mikhailovich's men] are united in Montenegro with the well-known separatist, Kersto Popovich, who for twenty years has been working on behalf of Italy. Thus fratricidal war was provoked and is being conducted under the leadership of Drazha Mikhailovich, about whose treachery there is official evidence in documents found on his adjutant, Major Todorovich, and others."

The declaration was signed by seventy-five persons, several of them well-known Yugoslav liberals and progressives. They believed in national unity both for the sake of effective resistance and because they hoped for Yugoslavia's eventual reorganization upon a sounder basis than the one on which the country was created in 1918. Among them were priests of the Serbian Orthodox Church and minor leaders in the Independent Democratic and Agrarian parties, two of whom were a former senator in the Belgrade parliament named Marko Vuyachich and a colonel of the Yugoslav Army, Savo Orovich.

Orovich had tried to work with Mikhailovich but had been forced to abandon the attempt. Mikhailovich was moving farther and farther away from immediate resistance against the Axis; his attack on the

Sandjak-Montenegro guerrillas was more than Orovich could stomach. So he joined the Partisans, whose attacks upon Axis forces were becoming increasingly effective.

Personally, having fallen victim to the Mikhailovich legend along with everybody else, I found this ICN dispatch in the *Daily Worker* hard to take. At the same time it was impossible to dismiss it. Several Yugoslav refugees had lately arrived in New York, including a few connected with the government-in-exile whose opinions I respected. They assured me of their complete confidence in several signers of the document whom they knew—among them Colonel Orovich, a first-rate man.

Also about this time information from the confidential source I have mentioned began to reach me which, although anything but Leftist —not even liberal—supported the ICN material.

In their declaration, the Partisan leaders meeting in Montenegro clearly were not extreme, were not Communistic. The signers called upon the "Royal Yugoslav Government in London" to put a stop to the collaboration with the enemy of its minister of war, and to the attacks he was directing against Partisan units in the name of the government and the king. They averred that the struggle for the liberation of Yugoslavia demanded national unity; that it was being achieved through the Partisan movement, which should therefore be assisted.

The signers of the declaration took a conciliatory attitude. They recognized the government-in-exile and its king as the sovereign Yugoslav authority. Why they did that at so late a date, I don't know. For the government to which they appealed was the quintessence of everything negative and futile in politics. It consisted largely of personal symbols of the whole immense European failure.

No group of men in the world thrown together for whatever purpose were more incompatible than the Yugoslav government-in-exile, except one or two other exiled governments. A while later I shall describe its personnel and tell how it happened to get together. Here let me say that for over two years fierce and pointless struggles raged among its cliques. It existed in a political vacuum and in growing dread of the postwar period. Drawing high salaries from the Yugoslav state funds deposited in England and America, most of its members lived in style in or near London; they were called "Your Excellencies"; but the government as a whole was—literally—captive of the British government. Like all other exile groups and "free" movements, it was, as already suggested, under British control and censorship; only perhaps

a little more so than most of the others. It could not move without British okay. And such was the mental subjugation of its members that often they were afraid to move even in matters which, as it turned out later, were perfectly all right with Prime Minister Churchill and Foreign Secretary Eden, to both of whom in secret they applied unquotable terms while worrying about the crease in their striped trousers when summoned to the Foreign Office.

On the other hand, it should be said that the Yugoslav government-in-exile was never satisfactory to the British. When the Foreign Office or the Military Intelligence tried to improve its present functioning or its potential usefulness to them, they came up against the stubborn senility and utter ineptness of its dominant group, the personal and political incompatibilities of its membership, the complete intellectual bankruptcy of the outfit as a whole—although it included a few sound individuals.

The fact is, however, that its very captivity favored the clique of reactionary oldsters holding the key ministries and allied with the small group of young army officers who, having attached themselves as adjutants to King Peter, exploited his adolescence and schemed how they might best advance themselves after the war. British captivity operated against the few fairly sound men in the Yugoslav government.

A second fact remains. By sending to Mikhailovich the wireless apparatus in charge of British army intelligence officers who became virtually his superiors, the British government—the part that knew anything about it—helped greatly to encourage his full cooperation with the reactionary clique in the government-in-exile. And it also meant that Britain quite as much as the inner group was out to tie Mikhailovich up as its man—for different but related reasons.

The British were thinking of the power politics which it was at least their tentative and not unnatural intention to play in Eastern Europe as the war developed. Perhaps this does not apply to Churchill and Eden, busy with other things. But all through '41-'42 much of the British ruling group, like much of the United States Department of State, was tentatively anti-Russian because it was anti-Communist and feared a revolution on the Continent. To combat this, the idea was to play along with European reactionaries wherever and for as long as possible.

This idea began to change early in '43 when powerful post-Stalingrad circumstances caused Britain to shape her policy toward postwar collaboration with Russia in Eastern European affairs. But it must be

stressed, as a matter of record and warning for the future, that before this intelligent and fortunate reorientation the diplomatic or international phase of the Partisan-Mikhailovich problem, handled by the rigid and corrupt inner clique of the Yugoslav government through and with the aid of the British Foreign Office, was badly bungled. This mishandling is partly responsible for the civil war in Yugoslavia, for thousands of destroyed lives.

Let me present the diplomatic or international phase of the Yugoslav nightmare in a roundabout way.

Soon after the early clashes between the Mikhailovich forces and the Partisans, leaders on both sides—including Tito, but not Mikhailovich—tried to reach an agreement to stop fighting each other and concentrate on the Axis. They achieved a partial success early in September '41, after which for about three weeks a few Partisan and a few Mikhailovich outfits fought together against the Axis. This occurred before they both realized the depth of the cleavage in their military tactics and purposes, to say nothing of their political attitudes and foreign connections.

I must repeat that as a general staff officer, and a colonel of the regular army now commanding its reorganized remnants, Mikhailovich felt very strongly that he should head all resistance operations. To his professional soldier's mind there could be no valid argument against it.

The Partisans, on the other hand, feeling their revolutionary oats and scoring military victories over the Axis occupation forces, were increasingly sure that *they* represented the people—the majority of the country, not as it was before '41, but as it was now under enemy occupation—and that *they* were laying the political pipeline to the future. They did not expect Mikhailovich and his units to subordinate themselves to Tito. Tito desperately desired to make a cooperative deal with Mikhailovich, although I suspect that in the back of his mind he knew all the while that any long-range collaboration was unlikely.

I have before me copies of two Partisan documents which throw light on the efforts to end the internal hostilities. Both are signed by Tito "for the Supreme Command of the Partisan Army of Yugoslavia." The first is a letter dated October 21, '41, and addressed to Mikhailovich as "commander of the military Chetnik units" and reads in part:

"We are informed by your representative, Captain Mitich, that it

is impossible for you to come to the final negotiations and that instead you are sending your plenipotentiaries to work with us for the solution of problems which must be solved between you and us. In our opinion [apparently because of Mikhailovich's absence] these negotiations will not result in what we and you expected. Nevertheless, we are sending our representatives in the hope of solving some of the urgent questions, especially those which are now affecting our relations unfavorably.

"You request that . . . we define our stand in reference to particular problems. We do so in general outline hereinafter, but wish to stress again that every question demands a thorough discussion and a common exchange of thoughts. As between you and us we seek the following objectives:

"*1.* Common military operations against the enemy, both against the Germans and Italians and the Nedich and Pavelich forces. To achieve this we consider it necessary to form a Common Operations Staff.

"*2.* A common system for supplying and feeding our and your troops, to be worked out through the Common Operations Staff which would detail special persons or create special bodies to carry out the tasks.

"*3.* A common division of captured enemy matériel according to the necessities of the front. Our principle is: *Everything for the front, everything for the struggle.*

"*4.* Joint regional or local commands, that is, two commands, yours and ours, but closely cooperative with each other—Chachak is an example. [This indicates that in the early months of resistance temporary cooperation was achieved here and there between local Mikhailovich and Partisan commanders.]

"*5.* A joint permanent commission attached to the Common Operations Staff which would attend with the greatest possible speed to all differences which may arise between you and us.

"*6.* A provisioning authority which would feed the population, oversee the economy, supply the means of warfare, and organize public safety and order. In our opinion it would be a grave mistake if in the present liberation struggle any of these functions should remain in the hands of the old county commissioners, communal executives, gendarmes, *etc.* To rally the population for the struggle against the occupation it is necessary to install public officials who . . . would be personally close to the people and therefore in position to assume responsibility. The old gendarme, police and county apparatus as well

as the old community officials do not answer the need. The old personnel has been in the service of the occupation and is infested with enemy elements and influences. It does not enjoy the people's confidence and is unsuitable for this critical period. We believe the national liberation committees which the people themselves have begun to establish are currently the most appropriate public representation. . . . These national liberation committees should be elected by the people regardless of political beliefs. In places where it is impossible to hold elections, committees should be appointed by representatives of all political groups which favor the fight for liberation. We also consider it essential to create a Central National Liberation Committee for all freed territories; and in order to maintain public order and safety we propose the organization of a people's guard in towns and villages.

"*7.* In principle we oppose compulsory mobilization. Recruiting should be on a voluntary basis. Men should be free to join Chetnik or Partisan units. Forced mobilization might be justified only on a local scale in particular instances of dire peril; and in such instances the joint [Partisan-Chetnik] Operations Staff should authorize it. Recruiting of volunteers has a great advantage in that units of such fighters are better than those consisting of persons forcibly inducted. Moreover, we and you do not possess arms in such quantities that we could risk placing them into the hands of unreliable elements.

"*8.* We take the position that all the units, commands and staffs, of both our Partisan and your Chetnik organizations, should unconditionally obey their supreme commands. It is unthinkable that the lower commands should be permitted to act on their own initiative in actions which might be directed against one or the other of our common enemies or which might involve our joint strategic or tactical problems. [The implication seems to be that some Chetnik commanders were allowed by Mikhailovich to initiate their own actions.] . . .

"*9.* In order to preclude clashes in the headquarters of your and our Supreme Command, we consider it necessary that our respective commands should be in different cities, each retaining its own local authority, but each having representatives on the staff of the other.

"*10.* In the interest of a successful struggle against the main enemy, the German occupation, we deem it necessary to conduct a vigilant and merciless campaign against all manner of fifth columnists and spies . . . who are obstructing our national liberation struggle. We hold that joint military courts should be created which would conduct investigations and pass judgment against these enemies of the people. Spies and

fifth columnists caught in the act should be punished forthwith by the command in whose jurisdiction the crime occurred. The command or commander passing such a judgment is to be responsible for the punishment. Motives of personal hate and revenge in cases of this kind are to be punished in the most severe manner.

"*11.* Against the [quisling or satellite] troops who are interfering with our national liberation struggle . . . joint action on our part and yours should be instituted for their liquidation. . . .

"*12.* We consider it intolerable that fifth columnists and spies should have either Chetnik or Partisan identification papers while engaged in . . . their dastardly work against the people. Such persons should be removed from the ranks, whether ours or yours, and surrendered to the above-proposed joint military courts. Individuals and groups under suspicion, whether they carry Chetnik or Partisan documents, should be arrested immediately and examined by a mixed commission.

"These are our proposals and demands. . . . Other questions exist, but the delegates themselves will bring them up and should solve them.

"*Gospodiné pukovniché* (literally: 'Mr. Colonel'), we consider the present situation too serious, and the responsibility which falls on us all too great, to wrangle over petty things and thus make cooperation and proper relations between us impossible. We trust most earnestly that you will use your authority to the full so that an agreement may be reached, and that you and we may join our forces for the achievement of our ultimate aim: *to free our homeland from the hated occupation and its servants.*"

Drazha Mikhailovich's representatives rejected points one, two, six and seven—joint military operations, a joint military supply system, an economic authority for the civilian population, and voluntary recruiting. None the less, according to their version, the Partisan delegates signed a partial agreement with Mikhailovich—but a few days later his units attacked theirs.

The second document, also a letter, addressed "to the Executive Committee of the Liberation Front of the Slovenian People" deals with the failure of the two sides to get together. The copy before me is undated but I gather the letter was written early in November '41, after Mikhailovich had ceased fighting the Axis and had begun to devote himself mainly to attacking and harassing the Partisans. The letter begins "Dear Comrades" and reads in part:

"Apropos of the present events in Serbia, where a sharp struggle has arisen between Partisan units and Drazha Mikhailovich's bands, we feel it is necessary to send to you, the true political representatives of the Slovenian people, the following information:

"*1.* The representatives of our staff had a number of conferences with Mikhailovich's people. All the conferences were concluded with written statements. Up to October '41 Drazha Mikhailovich rejected every proposal for a joint military action, maintaining that such cooperation was too early. Despite this our staff formed a pact with his staff according to which both sides bound themselves to help each other loyally [presumably with supplies and information] even when Chetnik units could not or did not take part in military operations. Up to that time our Partisans had freed from the occupation the territory from Sarajevo to Chachak and almost to the outskirts of Belgrade. According to [partial] agreements reached with Drazha Mikhailovich, our Partisan units and staffs permitted the Chetnik organizations to develop their activities in the liberated territories, to recruit and arm new Chetniks, and even to establish their local staffs on the basis of equality with our staffs. And at the outset, responding to the call of our staff, the Chetniks did take part [with us] in military operations against occupationists and their satellites.

"*2.* In connection with . . . the 'punitive expeditions' by the enemy against armed units of the Serbian people which can be described only as horrible (especially those in Northern Serbia), our staff proposed to the staff of Drazha Mikhailovich to form a Common Operations Staff, to mobilize civil authorities in the liberated territory and to undertake necessary measures for normal community life. Our proposal was that civil authority should be established in a democratic way by means of free elections. Organs of this authority—National Liberation Committees—should consist of honest men regardless of political orientation [so long as they believe in the struggle for liberation]. But Drazha Mikhailovich rejected both these proposals. He replied that a Common Operations Staff is not needed. On the question of civil authority his answer was that the old institutions should be maintained [even if, as the Partisans insisted, they were never popular with the people, having been established by the hated dictatorial regimes in Belgrade, and having subsequently collaborated with the occupation]. However, in spite of the fact that Mikhailovich rejected these two basic proposals, a compromise agreement was reached [under which] relations between the Partisans and the Chetniks were again made possible. As proof of our good will, the day after signing

the agreement with Drazha Mikhailovich our staff sent to his staff five hundred guns and forty thousand cartridges [captured by Partisan forces from the enemy]. This was a gift on our part.

"*3.* Yet only a few days after the agreement was signed certain Chetnik officers began armed attacks against our Partisan units. . . . In a railroad train at Pozhega they seized the Commander of our First Unit, Milan Blagoyevich [a veteran of the International Brigade in Spain] who had with him all the necessary identification documents. Pozhega had been freed by the Partisans, and following the agreement we turned it over to the staff of Drazha Mikhailovich for a center of his organization. But his officers killed our commander after torturing him in a most bestial manner. . . . On learning of this crime our staff sent a protest; we refrained from making the incident a provocation for fratricidal warfare. . . . The following day a Chetnik band stopped one of our munitions automobiles bound for the front near Kralyevo, killed our driver and the Partisan guards, and destroyed the car. . . . On the same day the Chetniks of Drazha Mikhailovich disarmed the Partisan guard at Kosyerats, arrested the whole Partisan staff, tortured the leaders, and finally killed nine persons, among them a Slovenian deported by the occupationists from Slovenia. . . . On the night of November 8, '41, the Chetniks prepared for an attack on Uzhitsé, Ivanyitsa, and certain other places which had been freed and were under the command of the Partisans. [For this purpose] they assembled all of the Chetnik units [in that territory], including those working with the Partisans against the Germans near Kralyevo and Valyevo. With these forces they opened an assault upon us. The Chetniks of Drazha Mikhailovich, as they call themselves, and whom the Yugoslav government in London calls the regular army of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, thus began open fratricidal warfare. [Actually, as indicated in an earlier chapter, this warfare had started on a much smaller scale three or four months before.] And thus they enabled the occupationists to stage an offensive against us.

"*4.* The above was clearly an act of treason. The Partisans treated it as such. Although not prepared for so sudden an onslaught, our units in the course of two days smashed the bands of Drazha Mikhailovich and captured several hundred Chetniks. The majority of these prisoners were misled peasants. [Most likely of the type previously described as anti-guerrilla guerrillas, armed by Nedich and Mikhailovich.] They surrendered, and we let them go home. . . . Thus we began to clear the territory. . . . But the Germans promptly made use of the Mikhailovich treachery and initiated a five-pronged offensive against the liberated

territory. Nevertheless, the Partisan units smashed all five German blows. . . . The liberated territory today is almost completely cleared of Chetnik bands. . . .

"5. During the Chetnik attacks against the Partisans our staff addressed several appeals to Drazha Mikhailovich begging him to cease fratricidal operations which only assist the occupationists. Our appeals were rejected or left unanswered. . . . Now it is clear as day why Mikhailovich attacked us and refused our appeals. When the Partisans occupied the staff headquarters of Drazha Mikhailovich, documents were seized showing that Mikhailovich . . . is connected with Nedich and the Germans, and that he has received sums of money from them for the fight against the 'Communists'—in reality, to fight the liberation movement in Serbia. Nedich himself has confirmed this as a fact over the Belgrade radio.

"6. Our staff will in the next few days . . . make a fresh attempt to come to an agreement with Mikhailovich. The Supreme Command of the Partisan and Volunteer Army wants to do this not because of Drazha Mikhailovich personally, but for the sake of the Serbian people. . . . The outlook for success, however, is very bad. Mikhailovich is demanding nothing less than the dissolution of the Partisan army [as a separate command] and that all Partisan units submit themselves to his staff. It is clear that our Supreme Command cannot, will not and must not accept any such arrangement.

"We are informing you of these developments in Serbia, which are the work of reactionary pan-Serbian [or 'Greater Serbia'] elements. We urge you to devote all your strength to enhancing the unity of the liberation struggle in Slovenia, and thus to preclude all possibility of similar events there.

"We want to add finally that all of Serbia west of Kralyevo, Krushevats and Kraguyevats in the direction of Bosnia has been freed. . . ."

This last paragraph covers one of the most amazing military maneuvers and achievements in World War II. But the publicity hoax credited it to Mikhailovich and his Chetniks.

Not as detailed as the Partisans', the Mikhailovich version of these negotiations and events is quite different both in content and emphasis. He communicated it to the government-in-exile piecemeal during October-November '41. I read copies of many of his messages, which were sometimes terse military communiqués summarizing several weeks' operations, and sometimes full of undisguised despair or anger. The messages were shown to me in the autumn of '42 by an

anti-Partisan member of the Yugoslav government-in-exile then living in the United States. I was not allowed to copy them, but they were to the effect that Mikhailovich had employed all his resources to induce the Partisans to come under his command and thus end the fratricidal strife, but had failed because they were "Communists" and "bandits" and "criminals." He used these appellations as though they were synonymous.

In every second or third message, he begged the government-in-exile for help in his difficulties with the Partisans. He advised, urged and implored them to request the Soviet government, through Yugoslavia's diplomatic representative in Russia, to prevail on the Partisans to enter his forces and join him in an "intelligent" resistance against the enemy.

After many delays the Yugoslav government in London got the okay of the British Foreign Office and started the diplomatic ball rolling. It rolled very slowly, for months and months and months.

Finally in February '42 the Soviet government gave the Yugoslav government to understand that the Mikhailovich-Partisan difficulty was purely a Yugoslav matter. To suggestions that the Partisans were led by Communists, members of the Third (Communist) International whose headquarters were in Moscow, a deputy commissar for foreign affairs replied that the Soviet government had no voice in the Comintern.

Things went from bad to worse.

By the spring of '42 most of the regular army men, including all Croatians and Slovenians, had left Mikhailovich. By then his forces consisted mainly of reactionary and crackpot Chetniks, the majority of whom were less anti-Axis than they were pan-Serbian, and of anti-guerrilla guerrillas whom the Chetniks had reorganized with better arms and expert commanders.

And by then General Dŕazha Mikhailovich, the minister of war, the exiled government's sole agent in Yugoslavia, became mentally and emotionally capable of large-scale operations against his Partisan countrymen; far larger than his attacks in October '41 mentioned in Tito's letter to the Slovenian Partisans.

Between early June and mid-August '42 Mikhailovich conducted a series of offensives against the Partisans with the aid of Nedich's militia in the southeast and Italian troops in the southwest.

In March '43 the Yugoslav government in London officially—almost boastfully—admitted these anti-Partisan offensives by Mikhailovich; and at the same time some of its members privately ad-

mitted to Stoyan Pribichevich, an American journalist of Serbian origin, then working for *Time, Life* and *Fortune* magazines in London, that Mikhailovich had a collaborative pact with the commander of the Italian forces in the Balkans. Pribichevich wrote of it in an article, "Yugoslav Fratricide," in the June '43 issue of *Fortune*.

While Mikhailovich was hammering at the Partisans, King Peter and some of the inner clique of the Yugoslav government were in the United States, guests, in fact, of the American government. Accompanying the king were two of his adjutants, Foreign Minister Momchilo Ninchich and Minister of the Court Radoyé Knezevich; and in Washington they received messages from Mikhailovich that "the people" were "exterminating the criminal and Communistic Partisans." The king and his entourage were too delighted with the news to be diplomatically silent. They talked about it at receptions given for the "young sovereign" by organizations like the American Friends of Yugoslavia whose supporters and members, knowing very little beyond the official propaganda, were Mikhailovich and Chetnik enthusiasts.

The fact that the Chetniks and Nedich's gangsters had reorganized the anti-guerrilla guerrillas and drawn them into their offensives against the Partisans gave a grain of truth to Mikhailovich's claim that it was "the people"—not he—who were "exterminating" them. Actually it was he. He had exploited the awful bewilderment and fear-motivated savagery of the anti-guerrilla guerrillas.

And "exterminating" was inaccurate too; an exaggeration. Mikhailovich unquestionably did great damage to the Partisans in Serbia, Montenegro and western Bosnia, but they were not exterminated. He killed thousands of them, destroyed scores of pro-Partisan communities, massacring their inhabitants; but this barely touched the Partisan-Liberation Front movement as a whole.

At the same time that he was "exterminating" their comrades in the south, the Partisans in southwestern Croatia and Slovenia were engaging Axis troops in battle, inflicting heavy losses.

Various indications suggest that Mikhailovich in conducting the "extermination" not only acted on the authority of the inner group of the Yugoslav government but also with at least the tacit approval of the British military agents assigned to Yugoslav affairs, including the gentleman interested in Rumanian oil.

Early in May '42 Russia seems to have been ready to cooperate with the Yugoslav government. In London, before he came to Wash-

ington, Soviet Foreign Commissar Molotov offered a pact to the Yugoslav Foreign Minister Ninchich. The offer terrified Ninchich, a shady figure out of the past. What would the British think! must have been his first and ruling thought. He did not accept the offer. He did not even inform his government of it; it was discussed only by the inner clique. But to Ninchich's surprise Britain herself as well as Czechoslovakia entered into pacts with the Soviet. So he tried to reopen the question when Molotov returned from Washington late in May—but Molotov was no longer willing.

Soon after this Mikhailovich was attacked by the Communist press all over the world. *"Traitor . . . pro-Axis . . ."*

In August the Soviet government addressed to the Yugoslav government a sharp inquiry: Why is Mikhailovich fighting the Partisans? Suddenly the civil war in Yugoslavia was very much the Soviet's business.

The Yugoslav government replied by quoting from Mikhailovich's reports insisting the Partisans were "criminals," and that it was not he but the outraged "people" who were bent on exterminating them. I read a copy of this reply, which reached a member of the Yugoslav government-in-exile living in New York early in October '42, and I do not recall ever seeing a more asinine diplomatic document. The Yugoslav government unwittingly gave a detailed picture of its own impotence; it also supported its minister of war's implied contention that the "people" were right in "exterminating" the Partisans because they were "criminals and Communists."

This was where the matter rested diplomatically in the summer and autumn of '42.

The double fact that the British government had done more than any other agency to create the Mikhailovich legend, and that it held captive both the Yugoslav government in London and its general in Yugoslavia, indubitably influenced Russia's thinking about Yugoslavia; and not only about Yugoslavia, but also about Britain and the United States, for there was no doubt that the governments of both these countries included key men who were fundamentally anti-Russian. The Soviet leaders knew this of course. They knew other things, for instance that British military intelligence men were at Mikhailovich's headquarters and that he was collaborating with the Axis.

There was little doubt in my mind that the Soviet's anti-Mikhailovich publicity campaign was really anti-British . . . and also anti-American in so far as the Russians thought we approved of British

—*Daily Worker* (*New York*), *Jan.* 11, 1943

tentative pre-'43 designs upon Eastern Europe after the war. The Partisans in Yugoslavia were calling Mikhailovich a British pawn, just as Mikhailovich saw them as primarily devoted to Russia. The Partisans hated "the British"—especially the London broadcasts attributing their victories over the occupation troops to Mikhailovich who had fought his last anti-Axis battle in October '41.

There was also little doubt that Russia, having been snubbed by Ninchich, meant to do what she could herself in order to save the Yugoslav theater of war through the Partisan apparatus. She respected the fighting qualities of the South-Slavic peoples and wanted them to continue the active day-by-day resistance. Now she knew that the immobilization of fifteen to twenty-five Axis divisions in Yugoslavia depended solely on the Partisans. And perhaps Russia was interested in the Yugoslavs not only for their direct contribution to the war but also because of her postwar ideas, whatever they might be.

Nor could it be doubted that—quite aside from the internal compulsions for a civil war and a revolution—the Yugoslav peoples were once again a football in international power politics, a sport that had been played to their continual disadvantage for more than a thousand years.

In the early autumn of '42 the vociferous issue in the Allied world was the establishment of a second front by Britain and America to relieve Hitler's pressure upon Russia. There was as yet no public discussion of the danger that Allied leaders might be sowing the seeds of World War III. Before late '42 and early '43 there was scarcely any open thinking about this. But with the picture of the Yugoslav nightmare reeling off before me it looked as though World War III were beginning before World War II was over.

The Loyalist-Franco war in Spain had been defined as a rehearsal for World War II; was there not danger of Yugoslavia's becoming to World War III what Spain was to World War II?

The Pan-Serbian and Ultra-Croatian Insanities

THE FEW PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES WHO KNEW Mikhailovich before World War II engulfed Yugoslavia tell me that in normal times he was politically a good Yugoslav and a good Serbian—"as good a Yugoslav," is the way one of them puts it, "as a 'good Serbian' could be." That is to say, he was not an outspoken pan-Serbian favoring a "Greater Serbia" at the expense of the sister-regions, inland Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia and Voyvodina. Most of these regions are either preponderantly Croatian or beyond easy or reasonable decision as to whether they are more Croatian than Serbian, or whether they should belong to Serbia or Croatia or some other regional unit. To Yugoslavia, to the "Yugoslav idea," to the union within one state of the three South-Slavic nations—Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians—Mikhailovich paid at least pretty convincing lip service. But it is apparent that about the time he was made a general and minister of war he had begun to succumb to out-and-out pan-Serbianism.

Pan-Serbianism is akin to all ultra-nationalistic drives which off and on seize spiritually inadequate or mentally inferior individuals in nations with great and gory histories. It is a nationalistic pathology that afflicts some Serbians, especially in times of crises when Serbian life and territories are in danger. And its worst aspects leap to the front when Serbians think of their neighbors the Croatians.

Hitler and his Nazi geniuses knew this and that was why in June and July '41 they got the Croatian quisling Pavelich, as the chief representative of the ultra-chauvinist attitude in Croatia, to slaughter in a few weeks tens of thousands of Serbians living in his "independent state" and along its peripheries. These Serbians differed from Croatians chiefly—in most cases *only*—in that they were

Orthodox while the Croatians were Catholic, and that they used the Cyrillic alphabet while the Croatians used the Latin. Hitler and Himmler calculated that this "river of blood" would destroy practically all the fellow-feeling that had naturally existed for centuries between large sections of the two peoples which spoke exactly the same language.

Such a destruction of fellow-feeling was certainly the immediate effect of the massacres perpetrated by the Ustashi under the personal direction of quisling Anté Pavelich and his principal aide Eugen Kvaternik, and—I must say again—under day-to-day Gestapo supervision. Witnessing or hearing of the massacres, many of even the most reasonable Serbians could not help being more impressed by the fact that Pavelich and Kvaternik and their whole murderous crew were mainly Croatians than they were impressed by another fact—that most of the Ustashi had been recruited and armed with Nazi-Fascist help partly from the criminal and moronic elements in Croatia, and partly from among Croatians who had been persecuted by the preponderantly Serbian regimes in Belgrade under King Alexander and Prince-Regent Paul.

Fellow-feeling for Croatians was destroyed in many Serbians both in occupied Yugoslavia and abroad. Pan-Serbianism intensified among the handful of Serbians who dominated the government-in-exile and its diplomatic corps. It intensified especially in the pan-Serbians who were not "real Serbians"—people like Foreign Minister Ninchich, a Christianized Hebrew and so more of a Serbian than most Serbians, and the Yugoslav ambassador in Washington, Fotich, an uncomfortable part-Jew perennially verging on anti-Semitism and related attitudes.

The massacre of Serbians in Croatia also affected Drazha Mikhailovich. His forces were from the very first under frequent attack from Pavelich's Ustashi. He saw Serbian communities destroyed by them. Serbians fleeing from Croatia came to join his army. By the time he was made a member of the Yugoslav government, its pan-Serbian inner clique had given up all idea of an eventual restoration of Yugoslavia, although it continued to operate—with Allied recognition——as the Royal *Yugoslav* Government. Mikhailovich had no trouble falling into line.

By the autumn of '41 the pan-Serbian group in London had become violently anti-Croatian and anti-Yugoslav; not so clearly in its official pronouncements which still continued to pay lip service to Yugoslavia, as in its actual conduct. This of course served Hitler's purpose: to

break up Yugoslavia so thoroughly that it could never be put together again in any shape or form: to make it easy for the Germans to hold the Balkans during the war and to exploit the region after the war whether they won or lost. In fact, as I shall show in detail later, the Nazi apparatus in Yugoslavia fed the Serbian members of the inner clique of the Yugoslav government in London with anti-Croatian material which they eagerly swallowed and then used as a basis for their subversive anti-Croatian and anti-Yugoslav policy and activities. So did their ambassadors, ministers and consuls in other Allied centers.

Almost all the members of the "Yugoslav" diplomatic corps, including Konstantin Fotich, had been appointed to their posts by the first openly pro-Nazi and pro-Fascist premier in Belgrade, Milan Stoyadinovich, a personal friend of Hermann Goering's and Count Ciano's. Most of them were Serbians or part-Serbians *à la* Fotich. Now they received confidential instructions from the inner clique in London to conduct an intense anti-Croatian, anti-Slovenian, anti-Yugoslav and pan-Serbian propaganda. For this purpose they were given large Yugoslav funds deposited in England and America which were Croatian and Slovenian no less than Serbian funds. These pan-Serbian diplomats and their agents, scores of them, went at the task with a vengeance, using every publicity trick at their command. Like Goebbels, with large sums of money available, they made it worthwhile for certain journalists in the countries in which they operated to play their game.

They emphasized that "Pavelich" and "Ustashi" were synonymous with "Croatia" and "Croatians." In fact, they seldom referred to them as Ustashi; nearly always as Croatians.

They had nothing adverse to say about quisling Nedich. Indeed their publicity material led some conservative and reactionary American columnists to refer to him as the "Serbian Pétain." In November '41 Fotich ordered his legation's press attaché, Bogdan Raditsa, to delete the phrase "head of the Belgrade puppet government" in the translation of an article from *Life* magazine which mentioned Nedich.

This pan-Serbian propaganda, which in general enjoyed the cooperation of many American correspondents, attributed Partisan victories to Mikhailovich, while all news of anti-Axis, anti-Ustashi resistance in Croatia which developed in '42 under the command of well-known Croatian political leaders was suppressed until it finally broke out *via* the Free Yugoslavia radio and Moscow. It ignored the obvious role of the Gestapo in the Pavelich massacres. It ignored also the fact that many plain Croatian people had formed into ill-armed

bands to protect the Orthodox Serbians in their villages from the Ustashi and Gestapos, and that in some instances the Ustashi slaughtered these pro-Serbian Croatian defense bands along with the Orthodox Serbians they had come to kill.

On May 23, '42 the Slovenian vice-premier of the Yugoslav government-in-exile in London, Mikha Krek (not a member of the inner clique, but intermittently trying hard to play along with it) wrote a letter to his fellow Clerical politician, friend and collaborator, Frants Snoy, then a minister without portfolio living in New York, in which he set down *verbatim* a conversation he had just had with Foreign Minister Ninchich and Minister of Justice Milan Gavrilovich.

Gavrilovich said: "We Serbians want to attain our national ideal after this war. We do not wish to make any concessions to the Croatians, nor do we want any from the Croatians . . . All Serbians must become united in one state, in one political unit, whichever expression you may prefer; but all Serbians *must* come together in one country which will be Serbian."

Ninchich used almost the same words: "[After this war] Serbia must achieve its national ideal"; and to achieve it, he declared, "*we are going to fight for our borders.*" Vice-Premier Krek emphasized these words. The "fight" Ninchich had in mind was a military war with Croatia—presumably after the conclusion of World War II.

Actually, the pan-Serbians did not wait for World War II to end before they started to make war on Croatia. Early in '42 Chetnik outfits began to kill off Catholic Croatians in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Dalmatia where they intermingled with Orthodox Serbians thus making it debatable whether those territories were Serbian or Croatian. At the same time, quisling Nedich, following the identical "ideal," to say nothing of Gestapo wishes, staged vast extermination campaigns against the Croatians in regions where Croatia borders on Serbia proper. So far as I know, Nedich was not in direct communication with the inner group of the Yugoslav government in London; there is no question, however, that he was at least in sporadic contact with pan-Serbians in England and America.

Early in March '43 a refugee from Croatia living in New York told me he had received information from his country that the Mikhailovich and Nedich gangs had killed more Croatians in '42 than the Ustashi-Gestapo gangs had killed Serbians in '41.

These massacres of Croatians were partly retaliatory. In the main, however, they were the beginning of the "*fight*," the war that Ninchich

had told Krek the pan-Serbians would wage on Croatia in order to "achieve our national ideal."

While butchering each other's fellow nationals, Nedich, as the Serbian quisling and a pan-Serbian, and Pavelich, as the Croatian quisling and an ultra-Croatian, developed friendly relations—the sort of "friendly" relations that existed for example between Mussolini and Hitler, Ribbentrop and Ciano, Franco and Laval. They exchanged complimentary letters as between one statesman and another. Early in '43 they met in Zemun, across the river from Belgrade; Nedich was *en route* to Hitler's headquarters on the Russian front, and Pavelich came to see him off presumably to ask him to take his greetings to their common boss.

How to explain this? It is part of the nightmare, part of the whole Gestapo-stimulated ultra-Croatian-pan-Serbian madness, within which both sides worked against Yugoslavia, against Yugoslav unity, and for "Independent Croatia" and "Greater Serbia," employing murder as the chief means toward achieving a mutually satisfactory definition of borders between the two countries—an impossibility.

The pan-Serbian slaughter of the Croatians was the same thing as the Pavelich slaughter of the Serbians—both a result and a new means of the German "depopulation technique." First of all it removed a lot of Serbians and Croatians from the face of the Balkan earth; second, it created new bases for future Serbo-Croatian antagonism, for difficulties in any future attempt to reconstitute a Yugoslav state. This was agreeable to both the pan-Serbians and the ultra-Croatians; neither wanted Yugoslavia restored in any shape or form.

Gestapo leaders were thinking of depopulation, of the "river of blood" between Serbia and Croatia; Ustashi leaders were thinking of postwar Croatia. They were clearing Serbians out of territories they wanted to see included in it. They were political perverts; but they had an "ideal" for Croatia just as pan-Serbians had an "ideal" for Serbia. Two chauvinist attitudes, two insanities, essentially the same, equally fantastic, products of the same centuries-old situation in the Balkans and in Europe collided within the bigger madness of World War II and crushed the lives of vast numbers of men, women and children who had no interest in either chauvinism, who were just people and who had been getting along together in spite of endless confusion and the horrors which have been their lot, in spite of their diverse religions and nationalities.

In normal times the city of Focha, in eastern Bosnia, was about half Serbian and half Croatian. In May '41 the Ustashi came there and killed all the Serbians who had not got away. Five or six months later a Partisan unit, made up of both Serbians and Croatians, seized Focha. They tried and executed all the Ustashi they caught—in punishment for the crime of killing the Serbians. They did not touch any Croatian because he was Croatian. Then the Chetniks defeated the Partisans and, capturing the town, killed every Croatian who had not escaped into the mountains. They killed them because they were Croatians.

The people, just people, Serbians and Croatians, naturally went over to the Partisans.

The Partisan movement was a year and a half old before any part of its political program was written down. But an unwritten program formulated itself in fighting action, in talk between battles, in physical and spiritual agony. It was very simple:

1. South-Slavic unity on the basis of equality and mutual respect for all national groups and all religions.

2. Fight against the domination of one nation over others.

3. Down with chauvinism.

4. Economic and social advances for the masses of people—the common man—after the war.

The Nazi intent in inspiring the wholesale slaughter of Serbians and Croatians by one another was to put an unbridgeable chasm of hatred between them. The chauvinists on both sides, in the country and abroad, and especially the inner clique of the exiled government of *Yugoslavia* itself, worked with gruesome fury to realize it for the Nazis.

Partisan policy, which was simply humanity and common sense, frustrated it. The plain people naturally supported such a policy.

Why Did Pan-Serbian Chetniks Join Up With Italian Fascists?

FROM THE START OF THE OCCUPATION GERMANS AND ITALIANS were not entirely hand-in-hand in Yugoslavia. There were rivalries, suspicions, resentments and cross-purposes between the Axis partners. But the Italians under efficient Gestapo supervision were always cooperative in the matter of the German "depopulation technique," especially as aimed at the Dalmatians who are preponderantly Croatian (the Italians have always wanted Dalmatia). And it was not long before some of Mikhailovich's officers afflicted with the "Greater Serbia" disease got together with Fascist commanders in charge of the anti-Croatian terror.

Early in '43 it became widely known as a fact that (quoting from Stoyan Pribichevich's article in the June *Fortune*) "large Chetnik units under commanders Gayich, Yevjevich and Birchanin had joined the Italian army to raid Partisan villages in Dalmatia and Bosnia, and to establish Chetnik training camps in Tserkvenitsa, Split and other Italian-occupied coastal towns." This team-work between the Fascists and pan-Serbians was already in full swing in the early spring of '42, as shown by a report dated "Split, June '42" which a Serbian in Dalmatia sent—no doubt with Italian help *via* Switzerland—to another Serbian living in London and closely connected with the inner clique of the government-in-exile. I quote in part from this report, copies of which were given to leading pan-Serbians in London and the United States:

"On the ninth of this month I had a conference with General Drazha Mikhailovich's representatives in Split, Infantry Lieutenant Vidak Kovachevich and Artillery Lieutenant Dis-Petkovich. In Split resides also the former Chetnik leader Iliya Birchanin, now an invalid. [According to the Yugoslav government's official announcement early in '43, Birchanin died in Split—presumably of a Partisan bullet.]

". . . Here and there in the so-called Second Occupation Zone, the collaboration between the Italian forces and the Chetniks is very close. In Split it is being maintained on our side by Dobrivoyé Yevdjevich, in Mostar by Veselin Shola and Radmilo Grdjich.

". . . . In Split [which, remember, was under effective Italian occupation since April '41] there is a Committee to Aid Serbian Refugees. Its president is Sergie Urukal, Orthodox priest and former deputy in the parliament. The committee has already collected over five hundred thousand lirae and distributed the money among Serbian refugees [from places terrorized by the Ustashi or under attack from the anti-Mikhailovich Partisans], but that is not enough. In Split alone more than two hundred fifty former officers and non-commissioned officers of the Yugoslav army are receiving aid from the committee. . . . A way should be found [by the government-in-exile] to send money to Split for this purpose, perhaps through the International Red Cross, or the Vatican, or that great friend of the Serbian people, Grand Duke Sergie Romanoff [a surviving member of the old Russian imperial family], currently a guest at the Italian court in Rome. . . ."

I have reliable information from within the Yugoslav government that money was sent through Italy for this purpose.

Stoyan Pribichevich stated in the June '43 *Fortune* that members of the Yugoslav government in London had privately admitted to him that Mikhailovich had entered into a pact with the Italian commander in the Balkans, General Roatta, who in April '43 became chief of Mussolini's general staff.

On February 11, '43, the Istanbul representative of the London *Times* reported that Mikhailovich had a "sort of tacit truce with the Italians." And three months earlier, on November 20, '42, Hanson W. Baldwin, the *New York Times*' military expert, declared that "the defenders of General Mikhailovich do not deny that he may have been in touch with both the Italians and . . . Nedich, but they point out that 'deals' are common in Balkan politics."

"The question is," said Pribichevich in *Fortune*, "why don't the Partisans too avail themselves of such 'deals'?"

The answer is that the Partisans were as consistently and unequivocally anti-Fascist-Italian as they were anti-Nazi-German, and as anti-Nedich as anti-Pavelich, while Mikhailovich and his principal lieutenants in '41-'43 felt differently about the Axis lineup. As previously indicated, their ideological attitudes toward the issues of World War II diverged sharply from those of the Liberation Front. The Mi-

khailovichetsi in general became blind, fierce addicts to the "Greater-Serbia" madness, which in its dark "race and blood" roots was essentially indistinguishable from the basic propulsions of the Nazis, the Fascists and Anté Pavelich's "rebels."

The names of Mikhailovich's leading staff officers during '42-'43 were Vasich, Zuyevich and Molyevich. All three were known to be fanatic pan-Serbians perennially thirsting for Croatian blood, and many reports indicate that at times they carried more weight than Mikhailovich. They had virtually independent commands. In '42 some of the British agents in Yugoslavia relied more on Vasich than on Mikhailovich who, although formerly moderate in his personal habits, had begun to drink heavily and become abusive. This reliance upon Vasich was true also of some of the insiders of the Yugoslav government and of most of the British military intelligence in London who were interested in Yugoslavia.

In common with the inner clique of the government-in-exile, an influential section of official Britain favored the pan-Serbian idea, as did some of the high officials in Washington. The executive of that idea in Yugoslavia was Mikhailovich—not so much the man as the name, which covered also the doings of Vasich, Zuyevich, Molyevich and other pan-Serbian Chetnik leaders. It is significant that in the so-called Disobedience Order issued on September 9, '42, the general addressed himself only to Serbia, Montenegro, Voyvodina, Bosnia, Herzegovina and southern Dalmatia which pan-Serbians have claimed for "Greater Serbia" for decades. He left out Slovenia, northern Dalmatia, and the Croatian parts, traditionally coveted by "Greater-Italians"—not only by the frankly imperialistic gangster Mussolini, but also by such "liberals" and "aristocrats" as Count Carlo Sforza, a great friend, as we shall see later, of pan-Serbians since World War I. Before me is a communication dated March '43 from a man of standing in Dalmatia who urges that something be done somehow to stop the terrorism of Chetnik bands working with the Italians up and down the Yugoslav Adriatic coast. He gives the names of some of their leaders (Savich, Urukalo, Alfiverich, Vilovich, Uzelats and Pokrayats), several of whom had lately been decorated by Mikhailovich and the government-in-exile. The Chetniks in Dalmatia boasted that they had the backing of the Yugoslav regime in London.

Later I shall show too that in 1915-'19 official Britain along with official France had favored Italian imperialist designs on the South-Slavic lands, and in '42 one could not help asking: Was it doing so

again? Woodrow Wilson had opposed that earlier Italian imperialism; but now, in '42, it seemed every once in a while that a part of official Washington favored it tentatively, as it favored Konstantin Fotich's pan-Serbianism. This was the conservative part of Washington which, like a section of the British ruling class, feared Communism, Russia, and the pro-Russian, Leftist Slavs outside of Russia; and which automatically leaned toward reactionary forces in Eastern Europe.

Early in October '42 when I told a high Washington official that, according to my information, Mikhailovich and his pan-Serbian lieutenants were collaborating with the Axis, he asked me if the collaboration was "only with local Axis commanders" or with some higher Axis authority. I said, "What difference does it make?" He said it made a lot of difference. Not being a diplomat, I didn't see why.

Thus Britons and Americans occupying strategic positions in London and Washington who were perfectly patriotic and loyal, fell in through the funnel of their Toryism with the Axis technique of breaking up Yugoslavia. They feared the Partisans because, in their minds, the Partisans' Leftism looking toward Russia outweighed the fact that the Partisans were bringing Serbians and Croatians together and were thus defeating the Axis designs on the Balkans.

Britain Reshapes Her Policy

LATE IN '42 THE RUSSIANS SCORED THEIR AMAZING MILITARY AND spiritual victory at Stalingrad . . . and realistic Britain saw that Russia was going to be a great power after the war. The thing to do would be to work with her, not antagonize her.

The British government began to reorient its policy toward a close collaboration with Russia in the postwar period, and in March '43 Foreign Minister Anthony Eden visited Washington to get the United States to follow suit.

Before that, Britain took other concrete steps toward collaborating with Russia. Russia was, to say the least, annoyed with the mess in Yugoslavia. Early in January she sent the Yugoslav government-in-exile another sharp inquiry. This time she asked bluntly, in effect: why was Mikhailovich, its minister of war, tied up with the Axis, notably the Italians?

Russia of course knew that British agents were somewhere in back of that tieup. Worried about Britain's interests in the Balkans, in some cases about their personal investments in Rumanian oil and Serbian mines, and unable to deliver substantial help to Mikhailovich, they had at least tolerated his making a pact with the Italian commander in the Balkans and accepting Italian armaments.

Official Russia's query to the Yugoslav government-in-exile was a not so indirect way of telling the British that she didn't like it.

So official Britain, most probably on Churchill's direct orders, quickly took Yugoslav matters out of the hands of the men who had been in charge of them, and sent several others into Yugoslavia, either by submarine or parachute. And toward the end of January or early in February '43 one of the new agents requested and a while later demanded of Mikhailovich that he help the Partisans against whom the Nazis had just launched a large-scale offensive in central

Yugoslavia preparatory to fortifying the Balkans against possible Anglo-American invasion.

Mikhailovich refused.

By then he was too far gone in personal decline, was too full of hate, too involved in the contradictions within the United Nations, too much a victim of his own hating and reactionary superiors and followers, to be capable of objective intelligence. He was the outstanding victim of the process which Tito had foreseen would engulf his forces in consequence of his orthodox military tactics, to say nothing of his ideology. He had ceased to be a disciplined officer and a useful tool of British policy.

Unlike the British agents, famous for their Anglo-Saxon coolness, he was subjectively involved in the Yugoslav situation. He was personally and inextricably mixed in everything that had gone before. He had sealed his anti-Partisan, anti-Communist attitude with blood over and over again. A man is not an automaton. Mikhailovich had come to be pan-Serbian, a chauvinist; during 1941-'42 the British had tacitly helped to make him that, certainly neither they nor the United States had done anything to prevent it.

He was full of hate; hate exacerbated by blood-guilt—and he could not see beyond it. He had hated the occupation at first. Then his hate had split into several hates, and they had pretty well distorted him. He was now more anti-Communist than anti-Axis: he had an alliance with a representative of one member of the Axis. And he was more anti-Partisan and anti-Croatian than anything else. Until that moment in January '43, the official British had shared his anti-Partisanism. They had not discouraged fratricide. In fact, a small part of the equipment he had used in fighting the Partisans had been brought him by the British. Now on a sudden this ally pulled out of the anti-Partisan setup, leaving him holding the bag. These new British agents were ordering him to fight side by side with the Partisans, his enemies, taking no cognizance of his hate, which in consequence now split still more to include the British.

Mikhailovich probably experienced a kind of demented satisfaction in telling the British to go to hell.

He let the Germans destroy many Partisan brigades and drive some of them south toward Macedonia. At the same time he issued statements which were both anti-Russian and anti-British—thus clinching the new British attitude toward him (for the time being, at least) and also putting the Yugoslav government in London in extreme disfavor with the Foreign and War Offices.

Fragments From a Shattered Country

Freely translated excerpts from the diaries of three Yugoslavs: 1941-'43.

Slovenia Under the Italians

ITALIANS ARE FORCIBLY EVACUATING ALL THE PEOPLE LIVING within one kilometer of the railroad track running for twenty kilometers north and south from Novo-mesto. Also all trees in that area are being cut down. For this work they are using the prisoners in the Novo-mesto penitentiary. The timber is utilized for erecting bunkers and other defense installations to make the traffic safe from the guerrillas.

From Tezhka-voda thirty men were taken away by the Italians.

From Gabrielé near Terzhischè the innkeeper Kobol and the tailor Luzhar were abducted by the Italians. Their homes were looted. No one knows what's become of them. Nor what provoked the Italians to do this.

B——, in the village of X, told me he has a rucksack all packed and hidden in the hazel bush by the footpath which he will take on the run when he feels he has to pull out and head for the mountains.

A Partisan and an Italian patrol of three men each chanced to meet on Whit Sunday afternoon just outside of Ravnik, a village of twenty-five families in the Bloshkè Mountains. The patrols opened fire and two men were dead, a guerrilla and an Italian.

The other two Italians ran to the nearby barracks in Velikè Bloké and about an hour later a couple of companies of fully armed soldiers marched into Ravnik. The people knew of the battle and that one Italian was dead, and they expected the worst. In fact, in the intervening hour most of the men got out of the village, persuaded by their wives and mothers who thought the Fascists would shoot men before they would women.

The women began to drag things out of their houses, which they

thought the Italians would burn. But it was no use. The Italians surrounded the community and shot anyone who tried to escape. They herded everybody together around the village cistern and the captain assigned a large force to guard the people while the rest of the soldiers set out to destroy the place. They threw into the flames everything the women had tried to save.

The soldiers fired every house, every barn, every *kozolets* (drying-shed), every privy, every hog-pen. The eyewitness who told me about it said that the lowing and squealing of cattle and pigs in the burning buildings was something he would never forget. The Italians would not let the animals out. They shot the peasants who tried to make a dash for their barns to free the beasts.

The Italians seemed out of their minds—there is no other way of explaining the things they did. When they burn a village, they sometimes leave the church. But they burned the one in Ravnik. The bells fell from the tower with a terrific jangling crash and broke on the stone below. . . .

When the carnage was over, the Italians issued an edict forbidding everybody in the vicinity to give shelter to anyone from Ravnik on penalty of having his property confiscated. All the men who had not escaped before the Italians arrived they took to the barracks in Bloké where they kept them for three days. Finally they lined them up along a deep trench, which might have served as a common grave, and went through the motions of preparing to shoot them; then let them go.

In the Ilirska Bistritsa territory Italians killed seventy-five land-owning peasants, including some of the leading men in the region—this to retaliate for the death of two Fascists whose bodies were found in a roadside ditch under some bushes. No one has any idea who killed them. . . . The Italians also burned seven villages. . . . A general offensive against the Partisans is expected.

Our best Slovenian intellectuals are being rapidly exterminated by the Italians. The following writers, poets, journalists, editors and artists in concentration camps or prisons are said to be in ill health: Jush Kozak, Ferdo Kozak, Francé Bevk, Fran Albrecht, Tone Suhar, Ludvik Mrzel, Frants Vodnik, Loyzé Udovich, Milena Mohoricheva, Niko Pernat, Drago Vidmar, Janush Vidmar, Lyubo Ravnikhar, Milan Sever, Boyan Stupitsa, Slavka Severyeva, Yosip Zemlyak, Rudolf Kiovskiy, Viklar Smoley, Silvo Torker, Ciril Vidmar and

Dr. Fran Kidrich. Most of them were members of the Slovenian PEN Club.

The viaduct at Borovnitsa has already been blown up three times. Now there is a wooden bridge, and the train has to go over it very slowly.

I got hold of a mimeographed Partisan document, of which the following is a true copy:

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

In compliance with the Liberation Front's proclamation of May 28, 1942, *in re*: action on the part of the anti-LF White-Guard enemies of the Slovenian people, the individuals listed hereinafter were sentenced to death and shot:

Frants Tsvar, assistant parish priest in Shent Rupert;
Anton Yamnik, refugee in Shent Rupert;
Frants Nahtigal, parish priest in Shent Rupert;
Aloyz Grichar, shoemaker in Hrastovica, county of Shent Rupert;
Frants Grichar, carpenter in Zgornyé Yesenitsé;
Stané Grichar, artisan;
——— *Tobias*, mill builder, Zgornyé Yesenitsé;
A. Yakosh, land-owner in the county of Shent Rupert;
——— *Urbanchich*, resident of Trebelno;
Poldé, Stané and *Natsé Braydich*, gypsies; and
A. Plavets, house-painter in Mokrono.

The reasons for the executions are:

Tsvar and *Yamnik* and a third man as yet not apprehended were helping priest Nahtigal to organize the White Guards, calling them part of the regular Yugoslav army under the command of General Mikhailovich. They distributed White Guard recruiting propaganda and urged young men to join the "Mikhailovich army," *i.e.*, the White Guards. In addition, Yamnik was a spy for the Italians and in that capacity made excursions into the liberated territory.

Nahtigal was the leader of the White Guard organization. As parish priest he attacked the Partisans and the LF from the pulpit although he was repeatedly warned to cease his anti-national work. He exploited the Catholic Action organization, of which he was also leader, for White Guard purposes. This is apparent from the fact that Catholic Actionists all joined the armed White Guard band.

The *Grichars* made their sons enter the White Guards and urged their fellow villagers to do likewise.

Tobias and *Urbanchich* got food stores from the people on the pretext that they were secret LF procurement agents, but used the supplies for themselves and sold them.

Yakosh cooperated in White-Guard work and sent his son to Lublyana to improve himself as an organizer and speaker.

Plavets associated with Italians and gave them information.

The *Braydiches* were traitors. On the pretext of leading a small Partisan patrol to a cache of arms they tricked it into dangerous proximity with a strong Italian detachment.

All the individuals were guilty of proved crimes as defined in sections 1, 2 and 3 of the Edicts of the Staff for Lower Carniola issued on May 28, 1942, which require the death penalty, and they were therefore sentenced to die by shooting.

For the Staff Command of the Second Battalion, Division of Lower Carniola: (signed) *Prlek,* commanding the Second Troop; *Liko,* commanding the Third Troop; *Taras Trzhan,* political commissar.

Death to Fascism! Liberty to the People!

Slovenia Under the Germans

LAST WEEK THE GERMANS ANNOUNCED THE EXECUTION OF A hundred thirty-eight persons. No explanation was given.

From two villages, Lazé and Krnitsa, ninety families were forcibly removed—reason: "involvement in guerrilla activity." One house was set on fire; when two men rushed up to try to put it out, the Germans shot them.

The Partisans often raid the local cheese factories, stealing unfinished cheese—to keep it, they say, from being eaten by the Germans. Something to that idea.

In Draga near Begunyé the Germans made thirty-six Slovenian hostages put up thirty-six poles and dig thirty-six graves. Then they tied them to the poles and shot them. The execution took place right by the creek and the blood of the slain men colored the water all the way down to Begunyé. Among them were Yanko Yagodich, brother of Monsignor Yozhé Yagodich, director of the Bishopric in Lublyana; and several other locally prominent men, including former county committeemen.

Three days later they shot forty-two more in Draga. Again their blood flowed all the way to Begunyé. The Germans put the bodies in a deep common grave which the hostages had been forced to dig. They put them in like fire-logs: five lengthwise, five crosswise.

In Slovenian Styria (which the Nazis occupied the moment the invasion of Yugoslavia began) the priests were deliberately treated worse than anyone else. Stories of this are just getting into circulation.

Priests were required to pick up manure on the streets of Maribor and Celyé. Prostitutes were put into their prison cells. Some of the priests were assigned to brothels and required by the Gestapo to clean the rooms.

Many—the Reverend M. Zhivortnik for example—were beaten and tortured, some in the presence of the Gestapo *Ueberreiter,* who then lied to the Bishop's representative, acting surprised and outraged that any of his men should have done such a thing to a priest.

The Reverend Mr. Petanchich was forced to lick spittle off the floor.

After the completion of every task the Reverend Shimen Kotnik was ordered to perform, he was forced to repeat over and over again: *"Ich will arbeiten, ich will nicht mehr das Volk plauschen.* (I will work, I will not fool the people any longer.)"

There is no end to stories about the Slovenian clergy. One tells of a middle-aged priest who, after the Nazis had begun their terror in his town, called the people together and said: "I have been among you for twenty-one years. I have preached 'Love thy neighbor, love thy enemy,' I no longer believe in that. . . . Do what you can to save your lives." Then he pulled a gun from under his coat and blew off the top of his head.

The venerable and pious Monsignor Ozimich was publicly accused of homosexuality. The old man made no reply; he shook all over from anguish.

The seventy-six-year-old Jesuit, Father Zhuzhek, was beaten to death.

The retired priest Zlebnik was beaten till he fell unconscious, then the Gestapo shoved him into a bread oven, locked it, and kept him in it all night.

The Reverend Mr. Likar was ordered to roll in the mud in a public street.

Jews were treated even worse. Merchant Walterstein disappeared mysteriously after the Gestapo took him to their barracks in Celyé.

A man named Mayer came to Yugoslavia in '38 as a refugee from Vienna, where the Nazis had confiscated his wealth running into tens of millions. From then on he had lived in Slovenska Bistritsa with the support of other Jews. He was sixty-two years old when the Gestapos finally got their hands on him in Celyé. They made him crawl up and down a tall ladder. When he pleaded he was getting dizzy, they stuck him with bayonets and sharp poles. Then a seventeen-year-old Gestapo scattered some cigarette ashes on the floor and ordered the old man to carry them "piece by piece between your finger tips—like this" to the window and throw them out. He worked at this all afternoon, under the young Gestapo's supervision, till he finally dropped unconscious from exhaustion. A few days later they

shipped him to Dzhunis in Serbia; why there, no one knows, nor what has became of him since. . . .

In Studentsi the Germans arrested a group of young men. In prison one night they lined them up with their faces to the wall. The prisoners heard the Nazi soldiers load their rifles. There were commands. Finally the Germans fired—into the ceiling. Several of the men facing the wall fainted; the hair of two of them turned completely white.

Among the German soldiers of occupation the best are the Viennese. A few battalions of them came five or six months after the invasion. They have tried to be as decent as their Reich officers will allow them

From El Libro Negro: Del Terror Nazi en Europa

to be. They hate the Gestapo. A few have gone so far as to whisper to us Slovenians that they are sick of everything. They are worried about their families. One told me he was a member of the Social-Democratic party. He hopes Germany will be defeated. He shook his fist behind the back of a Gestapo and said, "The time will come when we'll hang them all!" But these Viennese don't trust one another. They don't know who is a genuine anti-Nazi and who only pretends to be. They mistrust those who are the most vocal about their hate for the Gestapo. . . .

Perhaps the worst part of the whole thing is the uprooting of families,

of whole communities, which is done so the Nazis can bring in German families from the Tyrol and Bessarabia and so on. It goes on night and day. Often Gestapos come in the middle of the night and say to the family or the community: "Come on! You're on the way!"

The weeping of women and children and the muttered cursing of men that go along with removal! Families are usually taken to Shent Vid and are there loaded into trains. Their baggage is put into cars in back, but before the train gets very far these cars are left behind at some station . . . and the people get to their destination, wherever it is, absolutely destitute.

How this awful tangle is going to be untangled after the war ends is beyond me. And of course the question that comes even before that is: *Will anything be left of us*?

In the Heart of the Balkans

ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL [QUISLING OR GERMAN] BELGRADE estimates published in the September 13th Sofia paper *Utro* there are 420,000 Serbian orphans under fifteen whose parents have died or disappeared.

Agriculture is practically at a standstill in many sections of Serbia; and even in some of the best Belgrade restaurants, patronized by German officers, the bread that is served is scarcely edible.

Queues before Belgrade stores are endless. . . . Yet what one sees in the people's eyes is faith that this agony will end as did that of 1915-'18.

Big battles are said to be going on around Foynitsa in Bosnia. Eyewitnesses say that on the outskirts of the town the other day there were heaps of dead enemy officers and soldiers and some say that the guerrillas took a huge booty after fighting for forty-eight hours without water and food.

The Gestapo in Serbia got wind of a new secret organization, then succeeded in learning the location of its headquarters and raided it, allegedly finding the membership roster. In a few days twelve hundred people were arrested. A special military court was set up which "tried" them with such speed that a death sentence was passed every five minutes.

The prisoners were accused of sabotage—disruption of rail and telegraph lines and destruction of other state property. Gestapo statements alone sufficed to condemn them. Between five and six hundred men and women, some very young, were executed.

The Gestapo in Belgrade arrested 158 leading intellectuals: professors, teachers, newspapermen, two former ministers of the govern-

ment, *etc.* Five men, two of whom were Nedich's secret police agents, came for each prisoner.

The men were put on a train and taken to Kraguyevats, where 4,562 men and boys were executed without trial in one afternoon last year. The intellectuals assumed they too were to be massacred. But the Germans herded them into a barracks and held them there for four days without food or explanation. Finally the men got hold of a copy of *Novo Vremé*, the German-controlled Belgrade newspaper, in which they found a list of their names and the information that they were hostages.

On the fifth day the Germans fed them and told them they were hostages no longer, for General Nedich had interceded in their behalf. They were kept imprisoned for another week or ten days, then the Nazis released those over fifty years old and retained about one hundred who are under fifty. What has since become of the latter is unknown.

Much is being heard of a Serbian monk, Miron Nikich, a guerrilla who has been issuing calls to "Yugoslav manhood" to go to the forests and mountains and join the fight against the enemy. The Gestapo has offered a big reward for him dead or alive. They say he is the chief of a group of ten Orthodox priests who are in the Partisan forces, but he has been addressing his appeals to Serbians, Catholic Croatians and Moslems alike.

Battles between the Partisans and the Axis around Banya-luka and Livno are almost constant. . . . In one day the Italians lost over nine hundred in dead and seriously wounded.

The Italian wounded are taken to Split, thence by weekly hospital ship to Italy.

In Karlovats, the Ustashi converted the Orthodox Church into a warehouse for their military supplies. All Orthodox priests in the vicinity were seized and taken away; no doubt killed.

In Glina, the Ustashi drove all the Orthodox people into their church. They said they would convert them to Catholicism. But then they closed the doors and slaughtered everybody inside.

Anté Pavelich's paper *Hrvatski Narod* says that from the territory along the River Una forty thousand men and women have gone into the woods to join the guerrillas. In retaliation the Ustashi destroyed eleven villages.

Threatening evil consequences, the paper admits that "the civilian population in many districts favors the Partisans." In Livan County people gave the guerrillas twenty thousand sheep, goats and pigs, eight thousand head of cattle, and the equivalent of one hundred sixty carloads of grain or flour.

Croatians who were shipped to Germany as forced laborers are escaping back to Croatia by the hundreds and are joining the guerrillas. They tell horrible stories of slavery in the Hamburg and Ruhr steel mills. They saw the bombardments by British planes and tell of their destructive effect and the panic among the Germans.

One of these Croatians says that Serbians whom the Nazis had shipped as slave workers to the Ruhr are escaping to France and joining the French guerrillas in the Savoy mountains.

Word goes around that on his last trip to Yugoslavia the Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler said: "The regions *must* be pacified. If there is no other way, exterminate the insurgents and their supporters in the villages with poison gas."

The main railway line going from Vienna *via* Maribor to Trieste, and the line going through Slovenia and Croatia to the Adriatic are perpetually disrupted. Italians acknowledge in the *Giornale di Roma* that Italy loses on an average of one hundred fifty soldiers daily in keeping trains running through Yugoslavia. The newest confession that the occupying forces can't deal with the sabotage is divulged in the German edict, signed by von Kasche, that all railway lines of "Independent Croatia" are to be controlled directly by German authorities. This was followed by a Croatian decree: "All villages along the main railway lines will take over the duty of surveillance of the tracks. Every village is responsible for the section of the railway running by the municipal frontier. Day and night peasants must stand watch and report every damage before any train passes the endangered spots. The villages will be held responsible for the material damage of transportation utilities, and hostages will be taken for every active sabotage."

Croatian peasants are engaged in widespread sabotage of Anté Pavelich's promise to the Italians of certain quantities of grain. Italians have sent troops in to "force a better harvest out of Croatia," but the result is that Croatian peasants are going into the woods in

droves. . . . Now both the Italians and the Ustashi have a war on their hands in regions where there was peace before.

Giornale d'Italia on June 30th admitted that Italian losses in the Balkans exceeded those of the Russian front and said that the revolt of the peasants in "Independent Croatia" and occupied Dalmatia is of such proportions that Italy is forced to maintain two armies in that territory.

Dalmatia Under the Italians

IN SPLIT, SEVENTEEN "COMMUNISTS" WERE SENTENCED TO DEATH. Five managed to escape from prison the night before the other twelve were shot—just how, nobody seems to know. The Italians were beside themselves over the get-away. Most of the twelve were very young; three under seventeen.

Auto-buses between Split and Zadar carrying Italian soldiers are convoyed by armored cars and light tanks to prevent attacks on them by Partisans holding some of the hills not far from the road.

Last night a voice on the Rome radio held forth on the "humanitarian principles" that activate the attitudes and behavior of Italian administrators in Dalmatia, Montenegro and Slovenia. Actually the Italian officials in these regions are mostly incompetent degenerates. There are practically no exceptions. Either Fascism has made all Italians hopeless as people or Mussolini has gone out of his way to dump the dregs from his barrel onto Yugoslavia. They are all experts in barbarism, incendiaries, killers of unarmed people. In Dalmatia and Montenegro they burned and pulverized with grenades scores of villages and murdered thousands of blameless people whose only crime was that they were not Italians and Fascists and could not pretend to have any use for the Hitler-Mussolini "New Order."

Yet not a word of this ever comes over the short-wave radio from America or England! Doesn't anybody there know that the Italian Fascists are as barbaric as the German Nazis? That they are in fact worse than the Germans? For you know where you are with the Nazis; they are always tough and brutal. But the Italian Fascist can be the worst imaginable hypocrite, pretending friendliness one minute and murdering you the next.

In Shibenik thirty men were sentenced to death and promptly shot for "disloyalty" to Italy. Some of these men were from Split. An instant before bullets riddled him one of the victims is said to have cried out: "I die without fear. I die free."

"Death to Fascism!
Liberty to the People!"

The Communists

I HAVE EMPHASIZED THAT ALL THROUGH YUGOSLAVIA THE MAJORITY of the Partisans and their Liberation Front supporters were not Communists. However, the Communist role in the development of the Partisan-LF movement cannot be exaggerated.

Immediately following Hitler's attack upon Russia, which came nine weeks after all other political life in Yugoslavia had stopped, the Communists intensified their activity. They were a very small group but they had been underground for twenty years, since '29 under the able leadership of Tito, and their spirit and apparatus were tailor-made for this new situation. They were the first to get into action which not only resisted the Axis but aimed at connecting the peoples of Yugoslavia with the future.

Traveling about in my native country during '32-'33, I had met several Serbian and Croatian and a few Slovenian Communists. A number whom I got to know rather well were terrific idealists by any standards. And their idealism seemed to make them incredibly tough and utterly unmindful of themselves. They lived for what they believed in, for a new society; and they were ready to die for it. Some had been underground since '21, when the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was declared illegal after it had elected fifty-nine members to parliament and rolled up a majority in the county of Belgrade.

Like Communists elsewhere, those in Yugoslavia were products of Marxist ideology drawing much of their inspiration from the Russian Revolution. But even more they were products of the internal conditions in Yugoslavia, in the Balkans and in the whole of Europe, current and for centuries back; and, most immediately, of the relentless and horrible persecution conducted against them by most of the Belgrade regimes before, during and after King Alexander's dictatorship—whether the regimes pretended to be democratic or not.

I was in Yugoslavia in the mid-period of the Alexandrian *diktatura*,

which maintained itself with the help of a special force of fifteen thousand agents (forty-five hundred in Belgrade alone) who hunted "political criminals," and sixty thousand uniformed gendarmes who in addition to their regular duties were ceaselessly on the lookout for Reds and other oppositionists such as ultra-nationalistic Croatians. In the course of my ten-month visit I witnessed scenes of terror in the streets of Belgrade, Zagreb, Lublyana and elsewhere. And, as related briefly in *The Native's Return,* I became aware of an elaborate espionage system. In restaurant or coffee-house conversations, my new friends and acquaintances whispered most of the time even when we did not discuss politics or the economic situation; even if, as was almost always the case, they were not Communists in any sense of the word. It was a habit; they had been whispering for years lest someone interpret their remarks as Leftist or Communist and report them. I was told that many waiters were police agents; it was an even chance that in the party at the adjoining table was a plainclothesman. Men and women who came to cafés selling flowers, cigarettes, chocolates or postcards were apt to be special agents. In some cities it was impossible to get a license for these humble trades unless one was willing to join the terror as a side line. With the job of political sleuth one received not only the license but a small monthly sum as well. Also in the pay of the police were numerous hotel *portiers* and chambermaids, tram and railway conductors, newspapermen, factory workers, and students. In Belgrade close to three hundred university students were police spies. They were for the most part poor peasant boys who received government stipends for their education. Many could not get stipends or free lodging in King Alexander's Dormitory unless they agreed to "cooperate" with the police; then they often received two stipends as well as lodging. Some of these spies of course did as little for the police money as possible; a few, however, became passionate persecutors.

I came in contact with writers, professors, students and workers in Slovenia and Croatia, and with journalists and lawyers in Belgrade and Sarajevo, who had just been investigated, whose rooms had been searched and libraries confiscated, or whose mail was being opened by the police. I would meet people and a week later would be told they were in prison. I was told of Chetnik organizations in Serbian and Bosnian mining districts whose function was to terrorize workers receiving on an average less than fifty cents a day in wages. Many of the mines were operated by foreign interests. I was informed too that Chetnik outfits—the so-called *rezhimski* (regime) Chetniks, resem-

bling the American Ku Klux Klan and the Spanish Falange, working for factions in the Belgrade government and for special financial interests—existed also in the rural and mountain regions of Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Montenegro where the peasantry and mining and timber workers had Leftist tendencies or were traditionally pro-Russian.

There were "mysterious" killings; but everyone seemed to know who had perpetrated them. One night in Zagreb four Communists were murdered in the apartment of one of them. Police assassins had broken in and shot them with silencer guns in compliance with a confidential order (a copy of which I saw) from King Alexander's minister of the interior to the police chiefs of principal cities, instructing them to do away with the leading radicals in their communities.

"Politicals" were horribly tortured in the Belgrade *Glavnyacha* (Police Headquarters) as well as in similar centers of law and order in Zagreb, Sarajevo, Skoplyé, Cetinyé, and elsewhere. One secret agent in charge of a political police office was a former labor union secretary who had stolen the union funds. He was sued and sentenced to a term in prison, but he was freed soon after on consenting to become a terrorist. Some of the other secret agents were former White Russian officers of General Wrangel's army. They received comparatively small pay—from 2,000 ($25) to 3,000 ($37.50) dinars a month—but they kept practically everything they found on those they arrested. They were their own bosses, having a free hand with the prisoners, and they could arrest anyone they liked, any time. They had a motto: "The Constitution? We're the Constitution!"

In different places as I moved about the country, I met dozens of people, Communists and non-Communists (one putting me in touch with the other), who had been tortured or imprisoned or both. Their experiences were typical of the experiences of thousands of both sexes and all ages above the mid-teens, workers, peasants and intellectuals, who had gone through the Belgrade Glavnyacha and similar institutions in other cities.

One of the victims begged me not to tell the whole truth about this terror when I returned to America; he felt that Americans would not understand and might consider the Yugoslavs generally uncivilized and unfit for self-government. I told him of the third degree in America; of the K.K.K., the anti-Negro terror here and there, lynchings, race riots, and capital-labor violence in many parts of the United States. Then he made me promise him that if I ever told the whole truth of the terror under King Alexander, I would emphasize

and make clear that *what was true in Yugoslavia in '33 was in effect true also in Hitler's Germany, in Fascist Italy, in Horthy's Hungary, in King Carol's Rumania, in King Boris' Bulgaria, in Poland under the "colonels," in Clero-Fascist Austria, and sporadically in Greece.* I was asked to stress that terror such as went on in Yugoslavia was *a general condition in Eastern and Central Europe—the counter-revolutionary corollary of a revolutionary situation.*

So far as I have been able to determine, between ten and fifteen thousand had been tortured more or less systematically in the Belgrade Glavnyacha alone, where the agents in charge and their assistants in sadism employed methods which yielded nothing to the horrors of the Inquisition. Actually they were a mixture of the methods of Tsarist Russia and old Turkey. The Russian influence reached Yugoslavia *via* General Wrangel's White Guards, one of whom for a time, early in the 1920s, ran the Belgrade Glavnyacha. The Turkish influence remained from the centuries of Ottoman rule over Serbia.

When I left Yugoslavia in the spring of '33, over twenty-four hundred "politicals" were in state prisons at Mitrovitsa, Zenitza, Lepoglava, Nish, Maribor, Pozharevats and Skoplyé.

Punishments ranged as follows: for possessing Communist propaganda literature, one to two years; for distributing it, five years; for being in contact with the Communist organization outside Yugoslavia or bringing in Red printed matter, five to ten years; for having visited Russia; ten to fifteen years.

Several narrators of autobiographical torture stories, documented by scars on their bodies, wrote them down for me. And here is one of these personal narratives—indisputably authentic—which tells of the political climate in Yugoslavia ten or fifteen years ago and shows the indigenous background of the '41-'43 nightmare better than it could be conveyed by any kind of objective analysis:

"I was reading in my room that afternoon when about three o'clock someone knocked.

" 'Come in!'—and there entered a man who introduced himself as 'Comrade Mirkovich' or some such name. He said he was from Belgrade *en route* to Austria, stopping off in my town to see our mutual friend Comrade X. Did I know where X lived at the moment? He explained he had received my address from Comrade Y.

"Now X was a Communist whose home was in Belgrade and who was a part of the underground system whereby Communist literature

came into Yugoslavia. But Comrade Y could not have had my address; I had just moved.

"I knew at once that my visitor was a political detective, perhaps from the Belgrade Glavnyacha.

"I was afraid he might kill me then and there, so I said I was not sure just where X lived but possibly I could locate him, and suggested we go out.

"We walked around a while. And then, as we were going down an unfrequented street, I noticed a few paces behind us two local detectives whom I knew by sight. I glanced at the Belgrade agent and saw that he realized I knew he was a detective.

"The look in his eyes made me rigid with fear.

"All of a sudden the Belgrade man shoved me through a doorway into a dark, deserted vestibule, and the two local plainclothesmen rushed in and grabbed me.

"The Belgrade detective hit me in the face with his fist, which made my head reel. 'Now you Communist ——,' he said, 'where is X?'

"I did not answer. He hit me again. 'Do you know who I am?' he said. 'I am Vuykovich from Belgrade.' He hit me again.

"Vuykovich . . . who among Communists did not know who he was!

" 'Where does X live?'

" 'I don't know.'

"He repeated the question four or five times, hitting me each time when I said I didn't know.

"Then he struck me on the head with the butt of his revolver. I was so numb I hardly felt it. 'Open your mouth. Where does X live?'

" 'I don't know. I tell you, I don't.'

"He gave me a crack above the right ear. A moment later I felt a trickle of blood.

"Then Vuykovich motioned the local detectives to take me out.

"An automobile I hadn't noticed before stood in the street. They pushed me into the back seat and got in beside me. Vuykovich walked off and we drove away. No one said anything to me.

"Gradually as we drove on my numbness or apathy or whatever it was left me. I wondered where Vuykovich went. If he went back to my room, he would find nothing incriminating. . . . I found myself thinking intensely, feverishly. 'God damn these sadistic perverts, I'll fight!' Then: 'But I mustn't say anything which might give X away.' I kept saying this to myself over and over again in a crazy rhythm.

"The car stopped at police headquarters. Inside four detectives and a uniformed gendarme surrounded me.

" 'Where is X?'

" 'I don't know.'

"*Biff!* 'Where is the bundle of Communist literature he brought into the country last week?'

" 'I don't know what you're talking about.'

"*Biff!* . . .

"This went on for half an hour. Then Vuykovich returned. 'Well, has he changed his mind or does he still say he doesn't know?'

" 'Still doesn't know.'

"Vuykovich took a look at me. Then in a low, casual voice he said, 'Now, my boy, come on, tell us about it.'

" 'I don't know anything.'

"He hit me. 'I'll shake up your memory, you long-legged Red cur. You know what happened to Bratsanovich!' [Bratsan Bratsanovich, a Montenegrin Communist killed in the Belgrade Glavnyacha in '30.]

"I shook my head.

" 'You lie, you ——,' yelled Vuykovich, slamming me in the face. 'You know who Bratsanovich was all right. And we'll kill you like we did him. . . . I suppose you never heard of Vulch, either? [Stanko Vulch, a Slovenian Communist.] There was twice as much of him as there is of you, you skinny bastard. But *he* talked. Then we packed him in a crate and threw him into the Danube.'

"He hit me again.

" 'Think it over. If you talk right now, we'll let you go. If not, we'll *make* you talk, then we'll finish you off just like Vulch.'

" 'I don't know anything.'

"Vuykovich flew into a rage. He referred to my mother in terms I cannot repeat. He knocked me down, then kicked me in the stomach. I rolled over to avoid a second kick and was just in time to catch it in the small of my back. A third kick got me in the nape of the neck.

"Instinctively rather than intentionally, I kicked Vuykovich in the ankle and, my whole body in pain, rose on my knees.

" 'You Red ——!' —and with all his might Vuykovich kicked me in the throat, directly under the chin.

"I went down again, faint, my vision blurred, my mouth filling with blood. A thought came to me: 'If I let go and slip into unconsciousness, maybe he won't kick me any more; at least I won't feel it.'

"The telephone rang. It stung my ears. Then there was Vuykovich's voice: 'Hello. Yes . . .'

"The pains in my throat, back and stomach forced me to move. I sat up and leaned against the wall, my head spinning.

" 'Yes, yes, Chief,' Vuykovich was saying, 'I'll liquidate him right now. . . . No, no . . . you're right, no use taking him to Belgrade.'

"I remembered what comrades who had been 'examined' by Vuykovich had said about 'telephone calls' from 'the Chief.' It was probably a fake; but at that moment I wished they really would 'liquidate' me.

"Pretty soon Vuykovich came back to me. 'Hear that?' he said. 'The Chief says to finish you off. I'll give you exactly five minutes to remember where X is and what he did with the stuff he brought in last week.'

"He walked out of the room, leaving me to the local men, and I immediately felt better. I could think again. I knew this was only the beginning, a mild introduction to the systematic torture I would get if they did take me to Belgrade. One of the detectives unwittingly helped me keep my wits.

" 'Don't be a fool,' he was saying. 'We're only trying to knock some sense into you. Talk—then we'll get you a job on the force and you'll be all fixed.'

"This was a tonic. Inside me flared up the consciousness that I was a worker's son and had been in the class struggle when still in my mother's body. I must not let pain and humiliation numb my mind or force me to betray anything.

"Vuykovich returned. I did not talk; so he pulled off some of my clothes and squeezed my testes. 'Talk, you Communist dog, *talk*!' he commanded. I could not have got out a sound had I wanted to. Things went dark before my eyes. . . . Finally he released me, booted me once more in the stomach; and I lay against the wall in a whirl of pain, completely exhausted. I think I vomited and a feeble thought trembled in my head: 'This is the limit, I can't stand anything worse.'

"Then I barely heard Vuykovich say, 'Wait till I get you to Belgrade. Remember Vulch and Bratsanovich.'

"That roused me. Vulch and Bratsanovich were our hero-martyrs. I remembered 'Brats' as I had known him, and my agony was endurable. I thought of the hundred revolutionists who had been murdered in Yugoslavia in recent years by paid gangsters of King Alexander's regime. I had known six of them besides Bratsanovich. 'Well,' I said to myself, 'if Vuykovich kills me I'll be in good company.'

"With this thought I dozed off, exhausted with pain. The next thing I knew a gendarme booted me in the hip, pulled me up like a sack of cement, then half pushed and half dragged me down a corridor and into a cell, where I folded up on the brick floor.

"In the morning a gendarme took me back to the office. There was Vuykovich again, and four local agents. To all their questions I either said 'I don't know anything,' or kept silent. So they went to it. It was like the day before; only worse because everything came on top of yesterday's injuries. . . . The churchbells outside—O Christianity!—were ringing noontime when two gendarmes dragged me back to my cell.

"I lay in stupor till evening, I barely heard a passing gendarme remark they were taking me to Belgrade.

"The new Glavnyacha in Belgrade is a five-story building near the Royal Palace. The old Glavnyacha opposite the University got too small after King Alexander proclaimed himself Dictator; now all 'political cross-examinations' take place on the top floor of the new headquarters.

"Vuykovich, assisted by three gendarmes, herded me with six other Communists into an office upstairs, and then left.

"At the desk sat a man in shirtsleeves—Stankovich, notorious in all revolutionary circles in the country. He pressed a button and several more gendarmes and a tall, thin civilian came in. This was Kosmayats, more feared than either Vuykovich or Stankovich.

" 'A new bunch, eh?' he said. Then, reading our names off a list, he went down the line and dealt us each a blow in the face.

"After beating us for half an hour or so, Kosmayats and two gendarmes took us through a narrow door into a corridor lined with cells. I caught sight of prisoners tied hand-and-foot on the floor. Some apparently were unconscious.

"Us seven, whom they evidently considered valuable only as a source of information about others, they put into a large room called the *mansarda.* The floor along the walls was strewn with prisoners, some of whom had already been put through the mill. The room was still except for subdued groaning and sobbing, but most of the eyes turned to look at us; and such eyes I had never seen before: red, feverish, clouded, weary eyes, full of anguish.

"The gendarmes unshackled our hands. Weak and hungry I sank to the floor near the door, where a guard sat perched up on a stool. From somewhere along the corridor came loud groans.

"New prisoners, mostly young men, were brought into the *mansarda* every few hours.

"At noon a couple of gendarmes came with a basket of stale bread and threw a one-kilo loaf to each prisoner. Water was supplied in a filthy bottle out of which the mansarda inmates had been drinking for months.

"Nothing happened all afternoon—except for the loud groans from the corridor, the low moans of the people in the mansarda.

"When it got dark, I thought I would go mad. Blood pounded in my temples. And an overwhelming vague fear possessed me. . . . Then someone turned on the single electric light in the center of the room, and I felt better. Only my face, my groin, my whole body hurt terribly.

"It was late winter and it grew very cold in the room. The steam heat in the building is turned off after most of the downstairs offices close. My thin overcoat was not much help. My teeth chattered audibly and I shook all over, my jerking muscles sharpening every ache. Now and then I thought, 'I can't stand this much longer.' But the next few days taught me that, short of mortal wounds, there is almost no limit to what a human organism can endure. . . .

"It must have been still early in the night when Kosmayats entered the mansarda. He asked someone if his name was So-and-so. Then, '*Aydé*!—come on!'

"Would I be next? I waited, shaking with cold and fear. At times I could not breathe, I merely gasped. I clutched my hands but could not feel them—the strange sensation of no-sensation.

"At last two men brought So-and-so back and dropped him on the floor wailing. They were in civilian clothes, coatless, their sleeves rolled up—like a couple of executioner's assistants. They paused. One asked the other, 'Who does he want now, do you know?'—'I think so, if I can find him.' . . . They turned in my direction and in a flash I was all instinct. I sat up rigid, holding my breath, my heart pounding irregularly. I was ready to kick, strike, bite, scratch, yell. They came up to me. 'No; not him,' said the second man. 'This one here.'

"'*Aydé*!'

"They led him out.

"It was terrible to sit there in semi-darkness, shivering, sick, and listening to the groans and cries, and imagining what they were doing to their victim. Comrades who had come out alive from the Glavnyacha had told me of all the tortures. Maybe they were sticking pins under his nails, crushing his testes with the special kind of pliers, or tying

two-kilo bricks to them and stringing his hands to hooks in the wall, so he could not sit down, or —— I wished I would be next; it would be a relief. . . .

"Hours later they brought him back. He was sobbing deeply. They stood him up on his feet; he let out a terrific yell and fell on his face, whereupon the coatless plainclothesmen burst out laughing. He had been beaten for two hours on the soles of his feet. They were twice their normal size, and were criss-crossed with cuts.

"That night was the worst in my whole life. In the following days I saw greater horrors, but they affected me less. I got used to them.

"But my attitude to what was going on became stronger and stronger. I had fits of rage which I could hardly contain. I spent hours imagining special tortures for Kosmayats, Vuykovich, Stankovich and all the others, I realized vengeance was primitive, but I could not help feeling it. I wanted to see and take part in the torture of King Alexander and everybody in his service; of the whole class, tens of thousands of people, 'the Belgrade families,' for whose benefit he tortured us. I don't think I am cruel or vicious by nature. But what I went through in the Glavnyacha put me at times into a veritable delirium of hate for everybody from the King down to the lowest gendarme. . . .

"That night was the worst but also the most important of my life. Hitherto, in my thoughts and work as a Communist, I had dealt largely with theories in spite of my proletarian origin. Now I saw the forbidding chasm, the awful depth of class hate. Now I knew and felt what it was all about. Struggle! . . . Struggle to the death! . . .

"In the morning of my second day in the Glavnyacha new prisoners were brought in. Some had already been beaten up; their faces were swollen, black and blue, or smeared with congealing blood. Some had difficulty in walking.

"From among those in the cells about a dozen were taken out. I believe some were sent to trial before the Court for the Safety of the State; others were transferred to the old Glavnyacha; still others were released. A few evidently had not been tortured, or at least showed no marks of it. Several wore excellent clothes, even fur coats. And these showed the least signs of maltreatment.

"By-and-by they put some of us in the *mansarda* into cells along the corridor. Six of us they shoved into a hole scarcely large enough to sit down in. In one corner were bundles of confiscated Communist literature which the gendarme on duty permitted us to spread around to sit or lean on.

"My five cellmates were all strangers to me. They had been in the *mansarda* for days. Except for the 'preliminaries' they had not yet been tortured. Three had been in the Glavnyacha before: two workers from a mining district in Serbia and a Croatian railroad man, all Communists. Of the other two, one was a Montenegrin student in Belgrade, also a Communist; the second, a peasant from Voyvodina, was politically an Agrarian.

"The coatless men with rolled-up sleeves passed us every few hours. Coming, they brought a tortured body; going, they led out a new victim. Each time as they went by, our cell grew silent.

"The Croatian railroad man had been in the Glavnyacha with Bratsanovich, and told us how the latter died. I had heard the story before.

"I believe very few people have ever gone through such tortures as 'Brats.' He was nearly seven feet tall and built in proportion: a veritable giant of a Serbian. He burst the shackles on his wrists and the chains on his ankles, then for nearly an hour he tossed sixteen secret agents and gendarmes around the office. That they did not kill him on the spot was because they expected him to talk. He was guilty of the most serious crimes in their book: he was a member of the Comintern for the Balkans; had been to Russia; was a leader of the CPY, *etc.* . . . Finally they succeeded in keeping him tied up, and they tried the worst imaginable tortures to exhaust his super-human strength. With rubber truncheons they pounded the soles of his feet into a bloody mess. They put live coals under his armpits and tied his arms close to his body till the coals got cold. They stuck needles under his nails. They crushed his genitalia. Finally they broke all the joints of his fingers one by one. To all their questions he hurled the colossal curses that only a Serbian can utter. He taunted them by laughing while the coals sizzled under his armpits. He told them what would happen to them and their masters when the Balkans went Bolshevik. He never lost consciousness. They returned him to his cell and he lay on the floor, which was too short for his great body. He was unable to move. But his mind was clear and agile and he told his cellmates what had happened to him. When the cell was emptied of other prisoners, he called after them, 'But tonight I have a feeling darkness will swallow me.' He was right. During the night shots were heard in the cell and a few days later the papers printed an official police communiqué stating that the 'arch-criminal, Bratsan Bratsanovich, Stalin's personal agent in Yugoslavia,' had been shot when he 'attempted to escape' from the Glavnyacha. Now every year red roses come into bloom on his grave. . . .

"With 'Brats,' there was in the Glavnyacha a Dalmatian sailor named Klemensich. For six successive days they tortured him hours on end. He betrayed nothing and retained consciousness till the sixth day, when they drove a long, rusty awl into his heel—and three days later he died; whether of blood-poisoning or simply of pain, no one knows.

"I heard again the story of Nesich, secretary of Red Aid, whom—after days of torture—they threw out of a fifth-story window; it was officially stated that he had jumped out, 'a suicide.'

"Of such cases there was no end of talk in our cell.

"Late one afternoon they came for me. One of my cellmates whispered, 'Don't let them get anything out of you!'

"They took me to the office. Vuykovich and Stankovich were there. 'Take your choice,' said Vuykovich. 'Tell us where X is and what became of the printed matter he brought in two weeks ago, or'—pointing at a long piece of hard rubber, two small sand-bags, and three thick pencils on the desk—'or we'll let you taste these. With the sand-bags we'll give your narrow chest a massage you'll never forget. This'—lifting the rubber—'is one of the main articles of our constitution, and if we put these pencils between your fingers we can break them with neatness and dispatch.' He talked in a lazy, casual voice; he sounded tired.

"Then Stankovich snapped out, '*Talk*!'—and I was on the floor with him and Vuykovich on top of me, one beating me on the head with the rubber, the other kneeling on my abdomen.

" 'Talk! Where can we find X?'

"I could not speak.

"Vuykovich rose, booted me in the face, then sat down at his desk and began to typewrite. Without looking up he said to Stankovich, 'Give it to him.'

"Stankovich sat on my stomach, lifted himself up, then came down on me again with his whole weight. This went on till I lost consciousness. I passed blood for months afterward.

"When I came to I heard Stankovich cursing somebody about something or other. Then he said to a gendarme, 'Take this Communist scum to his cell.' He spoke as if I had begun to bore him.

"As the gendarme dragged me out Vuykovich, still at the typewriter, looked up and said, 'I'll see you tomorrow.'

"Next afternoon I was called again. Vuykovich was alone in the office. He ordered out the man who brought me in, then he told me to sign a paper.

"I said I would not sign anything.

" 'I've no time to fool with you! I've more important things to attend to.' He walked to the window, opened it, and said: 'Sign or jump!'

"I shook my head.

"He hit me twice in the face and brought his knee up into my groin. I doubled over.

" 'Sign it, or I'll leave you here for Kosmayats and he'll put you through the real thing. You damned fool, you don't realize how easy I am on you. . . . Get up!' He pulled me up and drove his fist into me. 'I'll give you three minutes to sign that, or Kosmayats for you! Or'—losing his temper and punching my face again—'I'll throw you out the window myself!'

"Barely able to keep from fainting, I read the typewritten statement, a confession that I had been caught with a quantity of Communist literature in my possession. Exerting all my power to think, I decided to sign. It would not incriminate anyone else. Then too I was so naive as to expect that when I declared in court that I had 'confessed' under threat of more torture, the state judge would dismiss the case. And so I signed. . . .

"They kept me in the Glavnyacha for two more months, till all outer marks of maltreatment vanished. There were plenty of other prisoners in my condition. We occupied a row of cells apart from the newcomers. Twice a week a doctor came to look us over.

"Slowly, slowly I began to feel human again. At times I listened to tales of torture with a curious, detached interest. I heard of instances where husbands were tortured in the presence of their wives, and *vice versa*, till unable to endure the other's suffering one of them talked. I listened to stories about people who cracked and told everything they knew, more than they were asked, giving names of comrades who a few days afterward were arrested; betraying the whereabouts of illegal printshops, and so on. I heard of one man who began to yell, 'Long live King Alexander!'—whereupon, roaring with laughter, they beat him some more. . . .

"Then came the trial. I was to be tried with a dozen or more Communists who were charged with minor 'crimes against the state.'

"When we were brought out to drive to the court-house, we saw that it was spring. The air was wonderful. We broke out singing the Internationale. The gendarmes let us sing: 'only not so loud,' said one of them. Many of them are secretly not unsympathetic to Communism. . . .

"In court my insistence that I had signed my 'confession' under threat of further torture was in vain. I was given a year and a half.

"In the state penitentiary at Mitrovitsa there were 243 political prisoners from all sections of Yugoslavia, about two-thirds of them Communists, and all had been tortured."

The foregoing narrative suggests, among other things, that underlying elements of the Yugoslav nightmare which began in April '41 had been in preparation for twenty years. The Communists, under Tito, were one of these elements.

The Glavnyacha was a trenchant part of their training. Those who survived it and the rest of the terror system were enormously tough and determined. Nothing worse could happen to them. They had hardened into kinship with "Brats" and Stanko Vulch and men who had been similarly treated in other countries.

The Yugoslav Communists became the living center of the gathering wrath against the vast and impossible situation which was Yugoslavia, the Balkans, Europe and the world between the two great wars, especially since the early '30s.

As I shall show later, Yugoslavia came into existence in 1918—with some outside help, British, French and Woodrow Wilson's—in compliance with old and tenacious impulses within the Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian peoples. The new country was based on a sound idea, but powerful immediate circumstances, in which were mingled internal and international threads, operated overwhelmingly to undermine it. Formed too hastily, the new state was little more than a football in Great Powers politics.

For seventeen years the ball was held by the French and British, and as such it could not go Left, no matter how badly the people of Yugoslavia wanted to go that way. The ball had to be kept from flying eastward, no matter how pro-Russian the Yugoslav masses were. No chance must be taken on that point. So all active Leftist or pro-Russian tendencies had to be suppressed or wiped out. King Alexander and his "Greater Serbia" politicians, backed by the *nouveau riche* "Belgrade families," found it in accordance with their own aims to oblige the corrupt clique running France, notably the French general staff, and the senile ruling group in Britain. The French and British ministers in Belgrade knew all about the Glavnyacha and made no objection. Nor did the Czech minister, since Czechoslovakia was in the Franco-British scheme. And it was known to the rest of the diplomatic corps in Belgrade, including the American minister, John

Dyneley Prince, who in '29 dedicated a book to King Alexander.

Before Alexander abolished every semblance of democratic life in Yugoslavia, a few members of the parliament opened a discussion of the government's anti-Leftist persecutions. One of them told me that in consequence of his efforts to expose the horrors of political persecution he had had to spend a night in the Glavnyacha. He barely escaped death. His parliamentary immunity meant nothing to men like Vuykovich, Kosmayats and Stankovich.

In '36, less than two years after the assassination of King Alexander, the football passed from the Franco-British to the German-Italian team—on the advice of Sir Neville Henderson, the British minister in Belgrade, who told the weak but normally pro-British and always anti-Soviet Prince-Regent Paul that the best thing Yugoslavia could do was to reorient itself toward the Axis. That reorientation of course made no difference in the Glavnyacha.

Naturally, inevitably, when the spring of '41 brought beauty and death to Yugoslavia, the Communists—tough, tested, selfless, opportunist—became the spearhead of the most determined resistance against the Axis and the quislings. They had Tito, whose preceding twelve years had given him better military training than he could have received in a war college. They had insight into the interplay of the domestic and international situations. One can say that that insight was bound to be distorted by their background, but it was firm and clear. It allowed no doubt and carried those who had it into definite action, which was not true of any other group in the conquered country. It enabled them to work out immediate tactics and think of long-range strategy and aims.

Naturally, inevitably, the Communists became the organizing and directing brains of various popular impulses and trends, all inimical to the old "manipulators of evil and referees in futility."

I quote from a report by a Croatian non-Communist, a former career-official in Belgrade, who was in Yugoslavia until the spring of '42 when he managed to get out and to the Argentine:

". . . The Communists were the only people in position to exploit the chaos which ensued upon the enemy's arrival. They forthwith spread among the people numerous capable men and women, who were especially effective in Serbia where, devoting themselves to entire counties, they mobilized the peasantry. Here and there they rang church bells to assemble the populace on village squares . . . and many people responded to their appeals, joining their units, some

of which were called Chetniks for a while, to be later re-labeled Partisans. . . .

"At that time [July and August '41] I made trips from Belgrade into the interior as far as Sopot and Kosmay. Transportation was difficult. The railroad bridge at Ralya, for instance, was destroyed and we had to walk from one train to the other over a makeshift footbridge. . . . In Kosmay county I learned the Communists had organized nineteen out of twenty-four townships. However, by the time I got there some of the people had begun to return home from the woods. This was true elsewhere.

"The Nedich regime in Belgrade was recruiting pro-Axis volunteers. Kosmayats, the notorious Glavnyacha torturer, was among the first to offer him his services.[4] Dragi Yovanovich was organizing the police and gendarmerie. Kosta Pechanats was gathering Chetniks to fight the Communists and other [anti-Axis] guerrillas. He addressed a proclamation 'To My Beloved Nation' calling upon the Chetniks and 'Serbian patriots' to join him. Scarcely anyone responded, for by then the whole city knew that his Chetnik headquarters was in the same building [the old Ministry of Justice] as the Gestapo.

"For a time, being busy in Greece and later rushing troops to Russia, the Nazis paid little heed to the guerrilla movement. They left it largely to Pavelich, Nedich, and the Bulgarian and Magyar troops. They themselves took over only the cities and bigger towns and put detachments at the main highway and railroad points. Thanks to this, the guerrilla movement had a chance to get under way. . . . Months later [autumn '41] the Nazis instituted a ruthless 'pacification,' but by then it was too late to stop *partizanstvo*.

"[There follows an analysis of the irreconcilable differences between Mikhailovich and the Partisans.]

"Russia's entrance into the war, followed by Hitler's failure to destroy the Red Army, gave the Partisans an enormous plus in the eyes of the people, to the detriment of all other guerrilla forces. Weary, sick at heart, the folk began to turn spiritually and politically to Russia—to the Slavic 'Mother Russia,' to 'Uncle Ivan.' His beard might have turned Red, but he was still 'Uncle Ivan' to most Yugoslavs. Perceiving this with their usual speed and acuteness, the Communists adjusted their tactics.

"Their propaganda stressed the idea that the salvation of South-Slavic peoples lay in Russia, and that salvation could be actualized only through the Partisans. . . . Russia's martial successes became Partisan successes. Their propaganda said that the Partisans were

the *new* movement, the bearers of a *new* idea whose immediate aim was liberation. And God knows that most of our people—the great majority—were tired of the old and had long looked for something new. . . . Soon Partisan units began to score victories of their own. . . . There was talk of Partisan 'armies,' indicating that *partizanstvo* was no mere local thing here and there, but had a general character with an idea, a plan, a leader. . . . Tito! Who was he? Few knew. But the simple, pleasant-sounding name ran through the country.

From El Libro Negro: Del Terror Nazi en Europa

"Winter came. Less and less food. Axis terror. Dissatisfaction increased. Things got specially serious in the 'Independent Croatian State,' where Pavelich sought volunteers to fight in Russia and Bosnia. . . . Men of military age and deserters from forced-labor service in Germany began to take to the forests and to call themselves *Shumari* (men of the woods). . . .

"Little by little, the woods filled [not only with men but women as well] and people who but a few weeks before had had no idea of anything of the sort began to work together with the Partisans. Close cooperation developed between the forest and the villege . . . especially in Bosnia and Dalmatia and along the coast of Croatia. The whole trend became strongly Left.

"Russia's successful winter offensive added new prestige to the Partisans. . . .

"Mikhailovich was only a name heard in short-wave broadcasts

from London and New York. But in Yugoslavia few villages had radios even in normal times. There was more talk of the Chetniks than of Mikhailovich. For months [in the second half of '41] there were scores of Chetnik outfits large and small which operated as independent commands under former Yugoslav army officers or local Serbian democratic leaders or old-fashioned nationalistic patriots. Some of them were 'bad Chetniks' who looted and massacred, giving rise to unfavorable talk among the people about the Chetniks in general. . . . Then the situation clarified itself. Many Chetnik units were wiped out or disbanded; some of the 'bad' ones went over to Mikhailovich, a few to Pechanats and Nedich, while the 'good' ones became Partisans. . . . But before this happened there was no end of confusion as to who was who among the guerrillas.

"Lack of information in some parts of the country was appalling. In mid-December '41 a widespread uprising occurred in northern Bosnia as word somehow got around that the Russians had captured Belgrade. The country was, naturally, full of rumors. People believed things which to sober thought were incredible. . . .

"I must admit that as I got out of Yugoslavia [May '42] the trend was strongly Red. . . . Large sections of the *natsionalni elementi* have ceased to count on Mikhailovich. They doubt that help can come soon enough from England and America to stop the roll of the Red Wave. They realize that the *natsionalna* energy is being wasted in the Gestapo-stimulated Serbo-Croatian antagonism and slaughter.

"In February '42 I was in Zagreb. . . . and had a talk with Lovro Ribar, son of Dr. Ivan Ribar, president of the 1921 Constitutional Assembly. Months before in Belgrade it was generally assumed that he and his father and brother had been killed by the Germans, but I repeat: I saw him and talked with him. He was in Zagreb on a mission from the headquarters of the Partisan army somewhere in Eastern Bosnia. He went under a German name and falsified documents. He remained in Zagreb after I left.

" 'We Partisans believe,' he said to me, 'that Germany will be defeated. Russia will accomplish that defeat almost alone. Russia's victory will be the Partisan victory. After the war Russia's prestige will be enormous in Europe. She does not favor a lot of small states in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. She wants large administrative-political units not organized on national lines. . . . It is the task of the Partisans and the LF to draw to themselves in the shortest possible time the masses of our peasants and workers' [so they will be ready for the postwar arrangement]."

Two New Leaders in Slovenia

AS A NATIVE OF SLOVENIA KNOWING MANY PEOPLE THERE, I read the reports on the Slovenian Liberation Front with a special personal interest. Every now and then I encountered some familiar name.

Boris Kidrich ——

I had met him in Lublyana several times during 1932-'33: a short, compactly made, handsome fellow in his middle twenties. His small, symmetrical head gave the impression of being at once round and square. There were broad clean-shaven jaws, a strong neat chin, a straight high forehead, striking blue-gray eyes. As he spoke, his look sometimes changed in an instant from a soft, rather typically Slovenian gaze to the steel-hard glare of a zealot.

He had been a Communist since his eighteenth year. Although still a student at the University, majoring in chemistry, he took scant interest in formal studies. The real profession he had chosen for his life's work—social revolution—was not taught there, but attending the only institution of higher learning in Slovenia gave him the opportunity to keep in touch with the *akademiki*, preparing themselves to become the country's future leaders.

I had several talks with him. His manner was all alertness; his speech concise, deliberate, dogmatic, exactly what he wished to say. He saw things in black and white.

Europe as we knew it, he declared to me, was done for: and to the devil with it! The life of a growing majority of people in all countries on the Continent was distracted, depressed and cut up by the criminal absurdity of mass poverty when there could be plenty the world over, and by the consequent political disorder. The peoples, particularly those who were young and the exceptional individuals, would not put up with this state of affairs indefinitely.

He said he was not well enough informed on America to talk

about it, nor about Britain whose empire made it somewhat of a special case; but the contradictions and paradoxes of life in European countries without exception were such as to be intolerable to the worker, the peasant, the scientist, the young person. Politically, culturally, Europe was a sick, torn, tormented continent. Those now ruling it were people who had played out their role, but who exerted all their tricks of cunning to hang on. They did not know what was the matter; some were not even aware anything was wrong. The few in authority who may have recognized the disease said nothing about it, having no notion what might be done. There was nothing *they* could do. So they merely tried to hold on with new, false slogans; to hold down what was trying to come up. They were fascists, although some were not yet obviously so. They were cynical. A few continued to use such words as "liberty," "fraternity," "progress," "justice," but had no answers to the questions bursting in millions of heads suddenly on the brink of enlightenment. They were intellectually sterile, spiritually bankrupt; in a way really worse than the out-and-out fascists. No program, no idea or formula could come from people who were anywhere near positions of responsibility in Europe (outside of Russia). Either they were at each other's throats or they had otherwise been incapacitated for positive leadership.

This went for the Socialists too, in fact especially for the Socialists and the so-called Social Democrats. They were really the worst of the lot. Their "reform" idea, their "gradualism," had tangled them all up in the debris of the old order and they did not know whether they were going or coming. They were confusing the issues. . . .

I mentioned democracy. Did I mean by that word the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century notions lumped under that title? Did I mean what went under that title in France or Belgium? The "democrats" in such countries were not excepted from his analysis of the current European leadership which could not lead. They too were spiritually, intellectually bankrupt: all dressed up, no place to go. Europe as a continent, as a civilization, as a block of countries on the face of the earth, was at cross-purposes, was organized *against itself*. He almost yelled the last two words.

Democracy as it was practiced in Western Europe, he continued, was incapable of tackling the problems before us. We were nearing the middle of the twentieth century, whose early decades had brought Marx into his own and revealed Lenin and Stalin. There was today no new positive creed in the world except revolutionary

Communism, whose base was in Russia. There it was being worked out as a practical program, as a suggestion and a promise to peoples everywhere, but particularly "backward" peoples, who eventually were bound to transfer it into world reality. But first there would be collapse. The greatest, most far-flung destruction ever. It had to come; and the sooner it came, the better.

Even before Hitler's rise to power in Germany, young Boris Kidrich, the Marxian dialectician, was certain that another great imperialist war soon would break out. Then—the end; then—a new beginning. Simple as all that.

The future, he repeated, had its base and its motive power in Russia. With those who objected to what was happening there, or who had misgivings about it, he was impatient. Did they think pulling off a revolution was like sitting in a coffee-house? ——

This is the gist of what Boris Kidrich said during one of our talks.

Without fully sharing his premise I thoroughly agreed with his later analysis of the Balkan situation, with his views on the corrupt regimes and dynasties in Belgrade, Sofia, Bucharest, Athens and Tirana. His facts were one-sided and angled sharply toward the Communist philosophy, but he was amazingly well informed. Some of the other Communists whom I met offered the same analyses and ideas. They were Party analyses and ideas, but Boris Kidrich evidently had mulled over them, and they suited him.

Listening to him, watching his face, I knew he could be immensely shrewd, daring, tough, ruthless. He was toughest with himself. When it came to the cause of which he was a part, there was not a soft thought or feeling in him. I gathered that in his own estimation he was without significance except as a factor in the Communist movement. And he revealed a moral attitude which from the Christian-bourgeois standpoint amounted to a complete lack of morality. He was ready to do *anything* for the cause.

I knew people who believed he was one of the most active Slovenian members of the illegal Communist Party of Yugoslavia. When I asked him if this was true, he grimaced impatiently. When I quoted to him a rumor that he was engaging in Stalinesque hold-ups to procure money for revolutionary purposes, he did not deny it. If I read his strange smile correctly, he wished me to assume it was true; only I imagine that his word for "hold-ups" was "confiscation." He was a new kind of Robin Hood with a world ideology, very able and resourceful, fiercely disciplined.

His was a new morality, a new patriotism.

He loved Slovenia . . . but differently than Bah-tch and Bozha. He was five or six years older, harder; intense, not lyrical. He was scornful of intellectuals who harped on the *natsionalni* problem, forgetting economics. He said that all oppression of small nations and minorities had its essential motivation in the financial and industrial interests of the ruling elements in the dominant nations or groups. He readily admitted the existence of the "Slovenian national problem," but was sick and tired of listening to those who seemed to be treating it as something new and separate from the small-nation and minority problems elsewhere in Europe. To him they were all essentially the same. They were involved in the swirling cross-currents of the imperialistic schemes of the capitalistic Great Powers.

The secret political police had arrested Boris Kidrich a number of times and had twice taken him to the Belgrade Glavnyacha. I suspected it was he who had suggested to some of his fellow Communists in other parts of Yugoslavia that they get in touch with me, show me the marks of torture on their persons, and tell me their experiences in the Glavnyacha and the state prisons.

He himself had never been seriously beaten or tortured by the political police. The explanation for this was his father, Dr. Fran Kidrich, a leading member of the University faculty in Lublyana, author of a monumental five-volume (but as yet uncompleted) philological work, *The History of Slovenian Literature*. Dr. Kidrich was of international repute as a leading authority on the Old Slavs, ancestors of the present Serbians, Croatians, Slovenians and Bulgarians, who originally came to the Balkans in the late sixth and early seventh century from regions now described as southeastern Poland and southwestern Russia.

A large, fine-looking man with an expansive, independent manner, the elder Kidrich was politically as unlike his son as he could be, a *naprednyak* (progressive nationalist), a liberal of the Thomas Masaryk school. As a young man when Slovenia was still in Austria, he had lived for many years in Vienna, first as a student of the famous "Slavist" Yagich at the great university there, later as an assistant librarian in the Library of the Imperial Court. But he remained always a passionate Slovenian and Slav. In 1914 he traveled extensively in Russia, doing research in the philology of Slavic languages; and in later years he was wont to hold forth on the rottenness of the things he had observed in Tsarist Russia and on why a revolution there had been inevitable. He himself believed in liberty and justice, gradual social advances, private and public

decency, the individual's right to his views and creative aspirations, and every nation's right to follow its own culture. Disagreeing with Boris on Communism, he disagreed far more with the Yugoslav state's official terrorism aimed at stamping out their political approach and philosophy, and he had the spirit and personal and political contacts to make his attitude known to the ministry of the interior in Belgrade.

At any rate, young Boris was spared the worst of the Glavnyacha. I think that at times this annoyed him somewhat, for he hated all forms of special privilege. But he made up for it in other ways. Sometimes for months at a stretch he devoted all his ingenuity and audacity to procuring money for Red Aid, an organization which succored the families of Communists killed or maimed by the terror. The CPY executive committee allegedly used him for particularly dangerous tasks, counting on the probability that if caught he would not be tortured and imprisoned for a long term or killed like Stanko Vulch, a worker's son. And I don't doubt that Boris himself looked upon his father chiefly as a man who, through him, was useful to the cause. The young man was a revolutionary before he was a son or anything else. His moral code had scant reference to the present, of which he disapproved in toto. He lived for a future achievable only through a sweeping revolution in which he was ready to perish any time he must. But he was also determined to die no sooner than he had to and was ready to use his father as a shield.

When I was again in America, Boris wrote me a letter mailed in Czechoslovakia, no doubt through the underground, in which he enlarged upon his previous analyses of the deteriorating situation in Yugoslavia. I did not answer it, but sent him an advance copy of *The Native's Return* early in '34. I don't know whether or not he received the book before Belgrade forbade it in Yugoslavia—the penalty for possessing a copy was up to three years' imprisonment. In any case I have not heard from him again.

He made a deep impression on me. He meant business; was terribly definite, always interesting. When I chanced to meet Yugoslavs lately arrived in the United States I sometimes inquired about him and I got a few hints of his doings since '33.

A year or so before Hitler's annexation of Austria, Boris was arrested and imprisoned in Vienna. A request to Schuschnigg for his release was granted. It was made on the intervention of his father who used even his Clerical contacts in Slovenia which had

influence with Schuschnigg. Returning home, Boris was arrested by the Yugoslav political police and held in prison for a year or two. Finally he was brought to trial before the Court for the Safety of the State on the charge that he was a Communist—all that the prosecutors thought they would be able to pin on him.

"Do you plead guilty?" the judge asked.

"Guilty?" replied Boris, who was handling his own case. "Sorry, but I cannot answer the question as asked."

"Why not?" said the judge. "What is the matter with the question?"

"Everything," replied Boris. "If you ask me whether or not I am a Communist, I will tell you that I *am* of course. But in my conscience no guilt attaches to my being a Communist. Rather, I glory in it."

The case was dropped. I think it was less because of his father's efforts this time than because of the pressure brought upon the increasingly characterless Belgrade regime, through their fathers, by the ever more numerous Communistic sons and daughters of influential Serbian politicians and capitalists. One of these young people was the daughter of Momchilo Ninchich, who had been foreign minister under King Alexander and became foreign minister again on March 28, '41, following the overthrow of the appeasement regime of Prince-Regent Paul.

In August '42 Boris Kidrich's name suddenly leapt at me from a report by a conservative in Slovenia who described him—now in his mid-thirties—as the leader of "the criminal Slovenian Reds." Later I began to get copies of official documents issued by the Liberation Front in Slovenia which bore two signatures. One of them was "Boris Kidrich, Secretary."

The other signature, preceding Boris'—"Josip Vidmar, Chairman"—also caught my closest personal interest.

Of medium stature, somewhat intense and blunt in speech and brusque in gesture as if filled by a sense of urgency and trying to overcome doubt or confusion within himself, Josip Vidmar was, when I came to Yugoslavia, thirty-six or -seven years of age. He was generally regarded as a brilliant literary critic and philosophic essayist. He belonged to one of the best known families in Slovenia. His father was an important industrialist (as industrial importance went in that tiny country). His brother, Milan Vidmar, ranked high at the Lublyana University as professor of electro-technics, was well

known in Central Europe and Russia for his books on the transformer, and world renowned as a champion chess-player, in which capacity he made several trips to the United States.

Josip Vidmar was a *Gymnasium* student in Lublyana when the Great War began. In 1915 he was pulled into the Austrian army, but —like Josip Brozovich (Tito) and tens of thousands of other South-Slavs—at the first opportunity he let himself be captured by the Russians. For two years he lived in Russia and returned home a great admirer of her peoples. In the next fifteen years he completed his formal education in Lublyana and Paris; translated many Russian works into the Slovenian; traveled extensively in Italy, Germany and the Balkans; edited a number of literary-artistic-philosophic journals which he started with like-minded friends, and delved into esthetics. Son of a well-to-do family, unlike many of the country's intellectuals, he never starved, never worried about money.

He seemed to me closer to possessing a world outlook than any other non-Communist I met in Yugoslavia. He spoke tentatively of devoting the next few years to research to determine the "essentials of nationality"—how nations come into existence, how they develop, why they decline and disappear. I don't know if he ever got into the subject as fully as he meant to. The idea grew out of a tiny book, hardly more than a pamphlet, *Kulturni problemi slovenstva,* which he had written rather quickly in polemical style with an immediate politico-cultural purpose in 1930, after certain pan-Serbian politicians in Belgrade, working together with some "local idiots" in Lublyana had come out for declaring the Slovenian language a dialect of the Serbo-Croatian tongue.

The "local idiots" argued that by "merging" themselves with "Serbo-Croatians" Slovenians would cease to be a paltry nation of but two million and become a part of a large people of fifteen million. In reply Vidmar assembled historic facts proving that good things come in small packages. The as yet unsurpassed culture of the Old Greeks was the product of a few hundred thousand people. Christianity was a gift of the small and despised Hebrew group. Italian culture was higher in the days of small Italian republics (Dante) than after the unification of Italy. The same was true of Germany, which after unification, followed by centralization, produced no figure comparable with Goethe.

Vidmar used the past only to leap from it into the future. He was a progressive, a radical in the sense that he went to the root of things; an anti-centralist, a federalist; an interesting combination of

nationalist and humanist. His world outlook was not inconsistent with his emphasis on national culture. Deep knowledge, such as Vidmar's, of one culture, revealing its individuality, leads to awareness of how cultures in general are intertwined; that is, that none are independent, that the large movements like Christianity, the Crusades, the Renaissance and the Reformation touched all and were affected in turn by the color of the various groups.

I think that Vidmar's thinking met at certain points with that of José Ortega y Gasset, the Spaniard who also has delved into the problem of nationality and has written of the Western man's everlasting impulse to seek a common ground with others more or less unlike him, to pool his ideas, manners and enthusiasms with theirs, and at the same time to hold onto his own particular values and characteristics. That two-way impulse is apt to jump like an acrobat "endlessly back and forth between the affirmation of plurality and the recognition of unity."

The point of all such thinking, reduced to simplest terms, is that people and peoples are both unique and interdependent.

Vidmar insisted that cultural uniqueness should be respected and encouraged in nations as well as individuals, for therein—in men and peoples being themselves, having a chance to organize their spiritual resources and find their special media and styles of expression—was the dynamic that produced personal and collective quality, culture, civilization; was the dynamic which would be most useful in working out the problems of interdependence; was in fact the only dynamic that could lead to real unity, the unity of the varied through mutual respect and mutual consent.

His own nation's uniqueness, said Vidmar, was to be found in its lyricism which, traceable through the centuries, characterized all good Slovenian art, manners, attitudes. This lyrical quality was good; it molded good, charming, not too ambitious yet effective people—Slovenians; and Serbians and Croatians, he argued, should not only tolerate it but help to increase its chances of co-existence with their own respective qualities, dramatic heroism and earth-and-sky mysticism: for that was the only way for them to achieve a unity which would be real, the only way to make their increasingly obvious interdependence intelligent and workable. And Slovenian uniqueness could exist only in conjunction with the Slovenian language, which was less similar to Serbo-Croatian than, say, Portuguese was to Spanish or Dutch to German.

The Slovenian language was to Slovenians what languages were

to all truly cultured people—at once their chief expression and their chief *means* of expression, their past and their future, their continuity.

Vidmar himself spoke and wrote an eloquent, rhythmic Slovenian. He knew its complex history for thirteen centuries back. And he held in effect that it was at once the container and the transmission-belt of the Slovenians' spiritual, moral and artistic values, passions, aspirations and competence—their soul and character. To take the language away from a people (were such a thing possible) would be tantamount to destroying not only the nation as such but the artistic expression and civilized effectiveness of most of its individual members. Denationalization, he argued, deformed human nature, confused the soul, crippled the character.

Vidmar's little book created a high sensation in Lublyana on the day it came out. But, Yugoslavia being what it was under the newly established dictatorship of King Alexander and his pan-Serbian element, it was promptly suppressed.

I think it is extremely necessary that we in America and our British allies understand these two men, Boris Kidrich and Josip Vidmar. I believe that the Russians in positions of power in the Soviet Union do understand them. Kidrich they understand as a Communist, Vidmar as an honest and trying-to-be intelligent exponent of the problem of nationality which the Soviets have been solving with striking insight and wisdom among the forty-odd distinct national groups which comprise the population of Russia.

The possibility is that Britain and America will have long-range perplexities in their relations with the Soviet Union and with Europe unless they too succeed in understanding men like Vidmar and Kidrich who, let me emphasize, are not restricted to Slovenia or Yugoslavia. Vidmar and Kidrich are not only Slovenians or Yugoslavs. They are Europeans, men of the middle twentieth century, bearers of ideas and spiritual and moral purposes that will be important long after the present period of World War II. They represent two powerful religions which are almost obsessions with tens of millions of people: national patriotism and social revolution.

It is of great actual and symbolical significance that these two men came together at the time of Slovenia's and Yugoslavia's most profound agony. I believe they had not met when I knew them. If they met during the years of the gathering crisis, 1933-'41, my guess is that neither suspected they had a mutual destiny. Yet they were

ready-made for the moment which struck in Slovenia in the spring of '41.

Just when, how and where they got together after the Nazi-Fascist occupation, I don't know. Perhaps by seeming chance sometime before the end of '41 in some wood or mountain cave. I think, though, that they soon saw they had something in common which was more important in that moment of history than the fact that one was a Communist and the other a non-Communist. To both, the moment was not only one of supreme crisis, of shattering damage, but also of endless opportunity.

Communist Kidrich's picture of the opportunity needs no diagram. But let us try to imagine how the picture looked to Vidmar, the cultured nationalist in the best sense of that term; to the man of Slovenia, to the European whose every cell was permeated with the tragedy of what has been going on there; to one of forceful ideas, which perhaps were not very original but were his own in that he had worked them out for himself, struggled over them with himself and in polemical discussions with others, and adjusted them to the problem of *slovenstvo*, which is everything that pertains to being a Slovenian.

According to the Vidmar of the early '30s, *slovenstvo*—for twelve hundred years under attack by powerful imperialistic neighbors on all sides—was saved by the peasantry and occasional intellectuals. As natural men living close to the soil, the peasants always had something in their character that kept a goodly number of them from succumbing to German, Turkish, Italian, Austrian terrorization, oppression and/or lures; that insisted—instinctively and stubbornly—on their inborn or God-given right to be unique, to be themselves, to be Slovenians, to express themselves in their own language.

This peasant stubbornness was enough to keep *slovenstvo* alive—but at times just barely alive. For a thousand years the Slovenian language was the speech of serfs, of *hlaptsi* (servants, folk of inferior status). For ten centuries Slovenia's ablest people, pulling away from the peasantry, took to Latin, German and Italian.

About four hundred years ago, however, there began to rise from the instinctively stubborn but inarticulate peasant mass a few intellectuals and poets who did not scorn it, who were inspired by its attitude, and who then gave it artistic expression and philosophical meaning in the Slovenian language. The first of these extraordinary men was a preacher, Primozh Trubar, famous as a leader in the Reformation, who insisted on translating the Protestant version of

the Bible into Slovenian, maintaining that his people understood no other language. Reformation was ostensibly defeated in Slovenia, as it was in Austria generally; but Trubar scored a great cultural victory and set a national-linguistic precedent for men of his stripe who followed him with increasing frequency and in growing numbers as enlightenment spread through Europe.

Thus, gradually, with the aid of general education that came along in consequence of the wider revolutionary upheavals in Europe and America, the modern Slovenian nation came into existence and more or less into its own. And early in the twentieth century it had any number of men and women competent to articulate its natural insistence on the right to be unique, to be itself, among the peoples of Europe and the world.

In the late 1920s Josip Vidmar began to stand out among them.

I have reason to think that apart from the accompanying horror the collapse of Yugoslavia in '41 was to Vidmar not a wholly unwelcome occurrence. As a Slovenian nationalist, he was not an anti-Yugoslav; on the contrary, he was a strong believer in the potentials of Yugoslav unity. But the Yugoslav state, as the native politicians and the agents of the Great Powers had worked it out between the two world wars had, to his view, never been over-inspiring.

In the late '30s Vidmar had tried to envision the future of Slovenia after World War II, which he thought was sure to come. He held it would depend on the same two factors—the peasantry and the intelligentsia.

"We Slovenians," he said in '39, a few months before the Nazis invaded Poland, "are now in three countries—a million three hundred thousand of us in Yugoslavia, a half million under Italy because Britain and France sold them out in their secret treaty with Italy in 1915, and close to a hundred thousand in Austria, part of the Third Reich, because Versailles did not honestly adhere to Wilson's principle of the self-determination of nations. At any rate we're all chopped up as a people. And this fact plays the devil with us in all sorts of ways. . . . Before we can have a possible future we must *all of us* attain political oneness and freedom and independence in a state of our own. This state must be accorded membership in the council of nations on the basis of equality. Then, as soon as we attain oneness and our freedom and independence, we shall be ready and *eager* to get together with the free Croatians, free Serbians and free Bulgarians"—by many also regarded as Yugoslavs—"and work out

with them a fair and honest agreement for a federation of national states with broad autonomies."

Josip Vidmar did not consider the formation of Yugoslavia in 1918 fair and honest. Vidmar was right. This does not mean that Vidmar would agree with those American and English publicists who consider themselves versed in Balkan affairs and write loosely and irresponsibly of the hopeless incompatibility of the Serbian and Croatian peoples, whom fate, they say, working through the Versailles Peace Conference, lumped into one state with the Slovenians. For in a very real sense these three peoples were joined into Yugoslavia at the rising demand of historic forces which appeared among them more than a century ago. The trouble was *with the way and by whom* Yugoslavia was organized.

Among the midwives at the birth of the new state were too many inexperienced idealists, atavistic minds, selfish and stupid politicians, and pan-Serbian chauvinists who had next to no connection even with the Serbian people and to whom Serbia had never been anything but a field of contention among themselves, a place to exploit for themselves and their friends the foreign agents. The pan-Serbian clique had in 1918, besides their experienced cunning in political chicanery, an additional asset in the person of Prince-Regent (later King) Alexander Karageorgevich, the actual head of the Serbian dynasty, who was one of them. As a result Yugoslavia became an unwilling and sloppy Greater Serbia, a centralist state without unity, ruled by fear of its neighbors and by a terroristic gang of pan-Serbian *tsintsari* grafters and Croatian and Slovenian opportunists and compromisers.

On the basis of what I know of him, I believe that Josip Vidmar assumed the leadership of the LF in Slovenia not only to help in the liberation by fighting the Axis and keeping Slovenia from collaborating with the occupation under the old-line politicians (thereby holding inviolate the name and the spirit of the Slovenian people), but also to develop a national mood and an organization with which he might do his utmost for a new and sound Yugoslavia beginning after the war.

The point in Vidmar's program referring to "political oneness" as a prerequisite to Slovenia's future meant that all territory preponderantly inhabited by Slovenians which had after the first World War been given to Italy or left in Austria and Hungary must be returned to the main body of Slovenia (where it was before 1918 under the

Hapsburgs). He meant that all Slovenians must come into one country, under one government . . . and this idea was shared by Slovenians wherever they were, in Yugoslavia, in Italy or Austria or Hungary, or immigrants in South or North America, regardless of their local or momentary politics.

Here we come to one of the most important and perplexing phases of European nationalism—its endless and fervent emphasis on the close relationship between a people and its land. Franz Rosenzweig, the famous German-Jewish writer on the nationality problem, once wrote: "The nations of the world cast their roots into the night of the earth, which is dead and yet gives life. In it, the eternal one, they see the guarantee that they too will endure. Their will to survive is thus linked to the soil, their hope of survival to their power over the soil; for it the blood of their sons is shed. Thus the soil provides subsistence, but chains the people to itself. Since they love the soil of their homelands more than their own lives, the nations are constantly facing grave dangers. Nine times out of ten this love may rescue the soil from the hands of the enemy, but the tenth time. . . . the nation may die on it. Thus the one who [holds or] conquers the soil finally will have the people." This can be said in another way: Thus the ideas and values which hold or conquer the soil finally will have the people. Or: Thus the people who succeed in holding onto their soil, which they regard as their basic strength, have the chance and the privilege to be unique, to be themselves.

The people-soil idea, which is more a feeling than an idea, is especially potent of course in peasant nations; and the Slovenian people were for centuries nearly a hundred percent peasant; today they still are somewhere between seventy and eighty percent.

This idea or feeling is one of the crucial points of Europe's nationality problem. Around it turns—dizzily, endlessly—one of the strongest of impulses; one which has the power of religion, which may be the residence of wisdom itself, which may be rooted in the deepest truths in human existence and progress—but it may also be the biggest fallacy under the sun. For, as Franz Rosenzweig added, the soil when loved above all else "may betray the people who entrust their future to the land on which they live" and the people may die individually and disappear as a nation because of their too great devotion to the earth under their feet.[5]

Subjective people-soil nationalism involves the supreme difficulty in practical international relations—the matter of borders. One nation's demand for certain boundaries may be completely reason-

able from its angle, but unreasonable from that of a neighboring country, or impossible in a wider international view. It may be that in '39 or later, Josip Vidmar the nationalist came to this same impasse in his own thinking and could find a way out only by getting together with Boris Kidrich the Communist. Life in the Soviet Union has sometimes been described as a picture of multi-national culture framed in the Communist economy. And therein Vidmar may have finally seen the answer for Slovenia, for Yugoslavia and the small nations of Europe.

For ten, fifteen years of his life before World War II Josip Vidmar, groping toward something that would be real and solid in the national life of his people, glared at the question: *To be or not to be?* which confronted the Slovenians collectively. It had faced them while part of Austria; it was now heavily underlined within Yugoslavia and under Fascist Italy, Nazi-held Austria and pro-Nazi Hungary.

I imagine that because he was a humanist as well as a nationalist, and because he was an honest man in the strictest intellectual sense, incapable of fooling himself for long, the path of his thought since early in '41 must have been torturous. . . . Here was this tiny Slovenian nation. Its people never were political. In a sense they were a little like the Jews. They had tried for a thousand years to cling (with waning success) to their soil, while the Jews were but lately attempting to regain Palestine; yet the Slovenian and Jewish problems were nearly the same: to keep from being crushed, to get along with stronger peoples by yielding again and again on all sides in most matters: in geography, in politics, in economics. Slovenians had once herded sheep and cattle on the present site of Vienna, in the region not far north of Venice, along the northern rim of the Adriatic now marked "Trieste" on the maps. . . . From the beginning Slovenians were a pastoral, not a warlike breed. They had let others literally push them around and into the tight little region they now inhabited. But they did one thing for themselves: they held onto their culture for dear life.

Moving away from aggression instead of combating it, they clung to their moral and spiritual values and to their speech, the one depending on the other. Not that they didn't fight; but never for themselves.

But the schemes that now crossed purposes and swords over the Slovenian people threatened their last national stronghold; threatened their future as a cohesive group. Both the German and Italian

Slovenia— at the Nations' Crossroads

The most northern part of South-Slavic territory, Slovenia has always been exposed to aggression from all sides. Until 1918 nearly all Slovenians were within Austria - Hungary, but in several administrative provinces (divide and rule). In '18 about three-fifths of them were included in the new Yugoslavia; slightly over one-fifth were given to Italy by France and Britain against Woodrow Wilson's protest; somewhat under one-fifth remained in Austria and Hungary. In '41 Germany and Italy divided the Slovenians and their lands about evenly between them.

imperialisms, neither without sympathy in Western Europe, were determined to have the country. Slovenians could no longer yield any more at any point to anybody. If they did, they would disappear as a people.

What should they do? Would they have to become political—political in the tough, predatory, chauvinist sense? Would they have to turn unlyrical, "pan-Slovenian,"—*un*-Slovenian? *Could* they? If they did, would not politics, the worst kind in the world, have to become their main preoccupation, at the expense of culture? And if so, what about what he, Vidmar, and many other Slovenian intellectuals had been stewing over for decades? Was it just a lot of empty fuss and fury? What sense was there in trying to persuade something to save itself if it would cease being itself at the moment when it was ready to try?

If they did turn to politics, would Slovenians not wind up like the pan-Serbians? For weren't pan-Serbian politics, which dominated Yugoslavia, a crazily devious but inevitable extension of the dilemma the Slovenians were now being forced into? Wasn't pan-Serbianism the consequence of a policy rooted in the need to retain and emphasize group identity in order to survive? Like other current chauvinists, pan-Serbians had come to have predatory aims; they wanted more than went naturally with the Serbian ethnic group. They wanted it for economic reasons, for self-defense and growth, for aggrandizement. With what results? Among others, the rise of a fanatic ultra-Croatian element. . . .

At what point in a nation's struggle for survival did the emphasis shift from the cultural to the political, to the tough and predatory? At what point in their political and economic plotting against others did a people's culture become their *Kultur* and then dominate them?

Vidmar's thoughts must have retraced this vicious circle frequently. Wherein, then, lay the answer to Slovenia's problem, the problem of the small nations?

Time and again his thoughts must have turned to the Soviet Union. There nations could remain nations. People of diverse nationalities were just left alone; in fact the backward national groups were aided economically and generally encouraged to be what they were according to their own cultural lights and backgrounds; that is, as long as they did not combat or threaten the over-all Soviet scheme. With that limitation, the USSR was clearly, emphatically, proudly, happily *multi-national.*

How hampering was that limitation? Was it a limitation? Wasn't

it to the interest of the nationalities to maintain the Soviet setup not for itself but for their own continuation?

But what about Communism? What went by that name in Russia certainly wasn't Communism as yet, but might be working in that direction. And what about the lack of individual liberty? Within the multi-national frame of the Soviet there was certainly far more hope of its evolution than in the Europe that was and that seemed very unlikely to change except for the worse. Among the peoples belonging to the small European nations, wasn't there far more pervasive sordidness, enslavement to poverty, ignorance, illness, under despotic rulers, even the ones who pretended to run their countries democratically, than there was individual liberty, individual uniqueness? How many millions in each generation were frustrated in their aspirations, ground out—lives without meaning?

And what about the Moscow Trials back in '37? They were disturbing then. Now, however, they weren't as important as that the Soviet's multi-national arrangement seemed to work. Somewhere in that system, horrible as it might seem to the privileged Western mind, imperfect as it was with its insufficient emphasis on the individual and its exaggerated emphasis on economics and the state, lay a clue. The emphasis on economics and the state rose for a different reason, aimed for a different goal than the imperialist emphasis on the state. It is the goal that makes the difference. . . . Economics? Perhaps the basis for a sound approach to the problem of small nations was really through economics, through some big economic-political upheaval like the Russian Revolution which was founded on the idea that nations and cultures and peoples (as opposed to the "élite") were entitled to respect.

He himself had scarcely thought about the interplay of economics and culture. Now he began to ponder it. The materials lay close at hand, in the range of his observation, experience, knowledge. Viewed from this new angle, the pieces began to assemble into a new pattern.

He thought of his father, a fine man personally, but essentially a tragic figure as a capitalist-industrialist in a small country. . . . Perhaps big, rich, well-developed countries like Britain and the United States could afford capitalism indefinitely. For them, it seemed to work, more or less. Their great resources and technics had given them the jump on the backward parts of the world, had given them a chance to set up controls over finance and industry. No overwhelming outside power could interfere with what the British or American

industrialists wanted to do, nothing except their own cutthroat rivalry or the objection of their countrymen could frustrate them.

This was not the case with small countries like Slovenia, like Yugoslavia; nor with regions like the Balkans or Eastern Europe which were made up of small nations. A small-nation capitalist was utterly dependent on foreign capital and on "contacts" with foreign agents and international racketeer-financiers; and his government, on which he also depended, was usually under foreign influence or control. The interlocking pyramid forced him, for his own survival, to support the regime in power in Belgrade or Sofia or Bucharest or Athens or Warsaw; and since the national and international setup worked only for its own aggrandizement, his own interests inevitably worked against the interest of the people of his country. He had to share and add to the corruption of everything in and around the small nation's government. He had to help in the deepening of cleavages, the stirring up of chauvinism: pan-Serbianism, ultra-Croatianism.

And since all this denied, short-circuited and frustrated the ablest and most idealistic people in the country, it could lead only to national discord, which was helpful to the capitalists at home and to their foreign masters engaged in exploiting the small nations. In that discord all sorts of crazy and horrible things happened. In Yugoslavia the nationalism of different groups was whipped up so that it amounted to a kind of *dementia praecox*. In whipping it up, chauvinist leaders exploited man's love of the soil, his affinity for his own people, for people who spoke the same language and shared his traditions, his historical and emotional background, and his fear of the unknown. And when this narcissistic nationalism took effect, its victims looked to the leaders to whip it up some more.

Take Milan Stoyadinovich. For twenty years he hovered around big business in Yugoslavia. In the early '30s he became a very rich man, working with all the large financial interests in the country. He was a clever promoter, a fixer; was able to turn to his profit everything that came his way—even the presidency of the Belgrade branch of the idealistic Rotary International. He had the right "friends" in England, France, Switzerland, Sweden, the United States, Germany, Italy and Hungary. Most of the agents of those countries living in Belgrade were his special pals. He was their man in Yugoslavia. And he was broker for "the best" people in Belgrade, including members of the royal family, who wanted to deposit their money, derived from Yugoslavia, in London, New York and Switzerland. It meant nothing to them that Yugoslavia was desperately short of

capital. Finally Stoyadinovich became all powerful in Belgrade. Prince-Regent Paul made him prime minister and together they chose for their ministers plenipotentiary and extraordinary all over the world people who would be useful to them. Between them the two of them, Paul and Stoyadinovich got hold of everything that was important in the country and to the country's foreign interests; then they neatly sold Yugoslavia out to the Axis. Stoyadinovich went to Germany to hunt with Goering, to Italy to bathe with Ciano at the latter's favorite seaside resort; and Goering and Ciano came to Yugoslavia to visit him; while Paul shuttled to and from Berchtesgaden when Hitler's finger crooked. . . . When a man tried to figure out what this was leading to, his mind faltered in confusion and his heart sank into despair. And if he spoke out, trying to be as reasonable as he could about an utterly unreasonable subject, trying to say that this could not go on, he was suppressed; was told that "we must be united," that we must abolish all opposition to those in power, because we, a small people, were in danger of attack.

Where could the South-Slavs turn?

Naturally the Western countries would be loath to give up the advantages that accrued from the exploitable setup of small nations. The finance-power people in those countries would fight to keep the setup or restore it after the war. The peoples of the big democracies would be inclined to back them, naively believing that restoration would be the democratic course.

But for the small nations a return to the *status quo ante* was out of the question. Where to turn, then? Russia, no matter what her deficiencies, had in her multi-national organization the sole answer that could possibly interest them. The Soviet Union was the only country strong enough, should they come within her sphere of interest and influence, to check a return to the prewar pattern.

If the content of Josip Vidmar's thoughts before and directly after Yugoslavia's collapse was not quite as specific and far-ranging as I have imagined it, then in all probability Boris Kidrich, greatly aided by the situation which stared at both of them from April '41 on, convinced him that only Russia had the answer to the Slovenian problem. Ultimately, if she remained powerful and commanded friendly sentiment in the small countries, she might be able to induce the Western powers to let her solve the small-nation problem in Eastern Europe.

I think Vidmar realized that there was no future for his idea of

culture in Slovenia, in Yugoslavia, in the Balkans, in Eastern Europe —unless the peoples of those lands got together in economic-political units shaped to augment rather than short-circuit and frustrate them. Perhaps he began to think in definite economic-industrial programmatic terms. Couldn't there be a system, other than the Axis "New Order" whose aim was slavery, in which, say, a river flowing through Yugoslavia would generate power also for Greece and Albania; in which Serbia could use the port of Salonika; in which something in Croatia or Slovenia would be directly useful to Albania and Bulgaria, and/or the other way about? . . .

Perhaps Vidmar realized that only within such a framework could there be security and continuity for cultural stirrings and development which after all was what life really consisted of, or should consist of. In such a system peoples would not be indifferent to physical borders, but they would not be panicky about them. Eventually geographical boundaries would lose their importance under the influence of healthy cultural emphases; for cultures invariably overlap, invariably overflow physical demarcation. They derive from and flavor one another.

I am certain that Josip Vidmar's leadership of the Slovenian LF had from the first a strong pro-Russian orientation and motivation. The probability is that he did not take on the label of "Communist" but he most emphatically also was not anti-Communist. I am sure he understood right off that all active anti-Communists, including those who based or pretended to base their anti-Communism upon adherence to democracy or Catholicism would sooner or later be driven at least to the outskirts of the Fascist camp.

So Josip Vidmar did not hesitate to become co-leader with Boris Kidrich.

It may be even that the intellectual and philosopher in Vidmar perceived in this joint leadership of a humanist and a Communist a symbol of the future. Might it not be pointing the way for all South-Slavs, including Bulgarians, and for the Czechs, Slovaks and Poles, back home to Russia, whence their ancestors had come twelve hundred years ago? It might contain a suggestion for Greece and Albania, Rumania and Hungary. None of these small nations need be incorporated into the Soviet Union. They might not even try to go Communist, not even in the limited current Russian sense; for most of the Yugoslav area, for example, with its mountains and tiny valleys, was not suited to collective agriculture. But the Yugoslavs might lean

on Russia; at least at the beginning, letting the more distant future work itself out from there on.

Slovenians are the westernmost and northernmost South-Slavs both in geography and culture, as western as the Czechs; but Josip Vidmar, a product of Western culture, had felt himself drawn to the East, to Russia, since his early youth. And it is probable that when he was drawn into the LF leadership in Slovenia he thought of the possibility that the South-Slavs, the Balkans, might become a kind of ideological and political bridge between the East and the West. On the other hand, he was not opposed to Sovietization. He welcomed the future, whatever form it took so long as it was away from the past.

To Vidmar the economic issue in Communism was not supreme. What mattered to him above everything, was Russia's wise handling of the nationality problem which not only permitted but encouraged peoples to be themselves, to be unique, to contribute to the sum-total of culture in their own languages and in their own ways. Official papers and documents in the Soviet Union were published in over forty languages. Cumbersome? Too much work? Look at the results—the Soviet was the only state on the continent of Europe that stood up against Hitler. Look at Stalingrad. That could not all be ascribed to size, resources and training. The point was that its peoples *worked together* with passion to face Hitler.

The significance of the following message which Stalin received on the occasion of the Red Army's twenty-fifth anniversary in February '43 over the Free Yugoslavia radio seems to me obvious:

"Firmly convinced that your truly popular and wisely led Army is invincible, the Executive Committee of the Liberation Front of the Slovenian People, uniting all genuine democratic parties and groups, has unhesitatingly believed in its inexhaustible strength and ultimate victory from the very beginning of the titanic battle in the East and during all the critical periods right up to the present.

"The Red Army celebrates its twenty-fifth birthday covering itself with the glory of heroic and great exploits such as history has never known. Joining in the enthusiastic congratulations that express the admiration of freedom-loving peoples everywhere, the Executive Committee of the Liberation Front in Slovenia congratulates the Red Army on this Anniversary, and once again expresses its deep faith in the historical mission of the Red Army, namely, the liberation of the peoples and *the salvation of culture and true humanism* from Fascist barbarism. [My italics.]

"From the very first days of this war the Slovenian people have been fighting with honor for their liberation and for the common aims of the United Nations. Its guerrilla detachments will continue to fight for the common cause regardless of sacrifices.

"On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Liberation Front of the Slovenian People: Josip Vidmar, Chairman; Boris Kidrich, Secretary."

"Look Deeper, My Friend!"

ABOUT ONCE A WEEK THROUGH THE LAST HALF OF '42 I RECEIVED a bundle of memoranda, underground papers, clippings and official documents which added light or heat or both to what was going on in Yugoslavia. My Yugoslav friends and acquaintances in New York had their own sources and we exchanged information.

One of them, for instance, showed me a letter from a friend in Croatia, dated mid-May and sent *via* the Argentine, which chided him for having referred in a short-wave broadcast to "Mikhailovich's heroic leadership of the Chetniks' great resistance against the Axis which has aroused so profound an admiration in America." The writer, a well-known man and neither a Communist nor even an active Partisan, stated emphatically that Mikhailovich was "not a positive factor in the day-by-day resistance of the various regions." Mikhailovich's name, he said, was scarcely known in some sections; in many places where it was known people shuddered when they heard it; and all the actual fighting against German and Italian and quisling forces was being carried on by Partisans.

Reading the varied reports, often mutually corroborative though they came from opposed sources, was like sitting in a dark projection-room in a Hollywood studio and looking at "rushes" of scenes without sequence in a great and awful film which was being shot by several different directors. Here was a story of something that happened in Serbia late in '41, then came a document about some development in Slovenia in the spring of '42. Piecing the material together became my chief preoccupation.

And as the true Yugoslav picture slowly emerged from behind the blurry distortion of the Mikhailovich legend, it began to look to me as if the future favored the Partisans. I began to believe that some political development would stem from the Liberation Front which would be the deciding postwar factor—that is, *if* the Serbian, Croatian

and Slovenian peoples were to be permitted by the Great Powers to decide for themselves.

Both apart from and because of the fact that, back in May-July '41, the Communists had been deliberate in stirring up the people to resistance, the whole LF movement was indigenous and spontaneous. It was a people's rising from the grass-roots, flower-roots and weed-roots up. It was a fighting action on the part of the common man, the little man, the intellectual, the misfit, the neurotic, the young person, the neglected and underprivileged human being; all of these—the majority of people in any country—suddenly were ready to confront their diverse enemies and misleaders.

For reasons already given, the LF's spirit fed in part on the inspiration from Russia. This was natural. The cause of most of the people in Yugoslavia was emotionally, nationally, socially, economically, geographically closer to Russia's than to any other Great Power's. It was an international cause arising from an international problem which apparently only Russia understood and appeared prompted to try to solve.

But aside from all that the *partizanstvo* sprang out of the continual and immediate plight of the South-Slavic masses. It was intrinsic with the peoples' best fighting traditions, with their hitherto unsuccessful centuries-old strivings for a free, decent, peaceful, creative, civilized life. The Communists simply were acute and agile enough to be able to fall in with those strivings at a crucial moment. The technique of their leadership fitted the times. They had slogans and directives which a good many people of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Montenegro were ready to follow.

The LF-Partisan movement was a sudden promise of fulfillment of all the apparently futile and defeated political efforts on the part of the peasant or agrarian and other democratic parties of the previous fifteen or twenty years against dictatorship and corruption and for a people's government in Yugoslavia. All at once it looked as though people had had to go through the Glavnyacha and all the rest in order to meet this present moment, which was a climax in Europe and a world catastrophe but also a chance for a new beginning.

The numerous reports which reached me about the LF-Partisan movement, even the unfavorable ones from conservative and reactionary sources in Yugoslavia, indicated that it might well mark a historic climax in the mass upheavals which began in the eighteenth century in various parts of the world, including America. It by-passed

or over-rode everything and everybody that was old or tired in spirit, corrupt and cynical and attached to the past or to things and ideas which had lost their validity, or whose existence leaned upon vested interests and special privilege. Like a magnet LF seemed to attract the young, the guttiest and ablest who saw that the best promise lay in going into the mountains, into the woods, to fight.

LF was many things. Primarily, however, it was an instrument of hope. In the immediate sense it was a concrete, fighting reaction to the "technique of depopulation." It was dangerous to individual life of course. It brought on reprisals. Yet it was also the avenue most likely to lead to survival. It gave meaning to danger, purpose to death.

LF was a way out to girls and young women who did not want to stay home and wait to be raped by Germans or Italians, or sent to brothels behind the Russian front. It was better to go with their own men and help to kill the enemy, blow up trains and bridges and viaducts.

The fact that some of the foremost Partisan military commanders and LF political leaders were Communists did not mean that the rank and file of the movement intended the country to go Communist. Nor did it mean for the country not to go Communist. It was not as definite and clear as that. But at no point was it anti-Communist. Indeed, a good part of the rank and file were tentatively pro-Communist. This was because many Yugoslavs had been pushed to the point where, so far as they could see, nothing else was open to them. They had been pushed to that point not only by the Axis occupation, and the absence of sustained, convincing political action on the part of Britain and America, but also by official Belgrade and its henchmen in the provinces for twenty years back.

The Communist Party of Yugoslavia, headed by Tito, did not raise the issue: communism or capitalism. It said, in effect, that the problem before the people was to summon all their energies in order to destroy fascism; everything else could wait. This became the program of Communists and non-Communists. The slogan was "Death to fascism! Liberty to the people!"

To the ragged, motley crowd rushing into the woods, the whole LF outfit, with its unorthodox, risk-taking military operations and heartening political possibilities, was simply trembling with expectations, fears and promises for the future. Ready to go through hell and high water, it was terrible and bloody—but so is every birth, so is every inception.

Thirty years earlier one of the best known South-Slavic writers,

Ivan Cankar, a Slovenian, had written prophetically: "Look deeper, my friend! Don't you see whence these new forces come? Life is stirring below where hitherto all was asleep and passive. Eyes are opening, seeking light; hands are stretching out, groping for goals. What if spring does come with storms and floods, with threats of utter disaster! From the soil beneath the flood-waters a rich growth will come! . . ."

Around the middle of August '42 the inner group of the government-in-exile sent a general order to all its officials and employees, wherever they might be, forbidding them to discuss the Mikhailovich-Partisan issue raised by the Soviet accusation of Mikhailovich, and instructing them to do everything in their power to prevent or discourage public speculation about it. But my friends and acquaintances among official Yugoslav representatives in New York and elsewhere in America continued to compare notes with me; while one or two other official Yugoslavs in the United States, not my friends, frequently came to talk with me because they were apprehensive about what sort of picture I might be getting of the Mikhailovich-Partisan rift. I had an exciting time talking with these people . . . and the picture developed.

Had it not been for the tragedy and the sordidness which ran parallel through the whole situation, it would have been an amusing time. In September most of the large newspapers, news-magazines and news associations in New York were still oblivious of the fact that Soviet sources had been calling Mikhailovich a pro-Axis traitor for a couple of months. When their attention was called to the anti-Chetnik dispatches in the *Daily Worker*, sharp schisms among foreign-news editors and rewrite men resulted. Some of them almost came to blows. They fought against giving up the Mikhailovich legend. What the hell was all this? Could it be true that Mikhailovich, the man they had helped to build up as a hero, was actually pro-Axis? They cabled their correspondents in London and Moscow and Ankara. Soviet officials, of course, had nothing to say. Yugoslav government circles, however, felt impelled to deny elaborately that Mikhailovich was a traitor and to declare that such stories were nothing but vicious Red propaganda. The denials got in the big papers and on the radio . . . and the Chetnik hoax began to crack, revealing the existence of the Partisans.

From reports reaching me in September '42 I surmised that the Partisans actually under arms were much more numerous than the

—Lithograph by P. Staronossov and V. Bibikov

Partisan Patriots

Mikhailovichevtsi. Varying estimates of the former ran between two and three hundred thousand; of the latter, to less than half those figures. The Partisans had the advantage in spirit and in that they were attracting new people right along, including deserters from the Chetnik units, which, however, had better equipment. My guess was that the two sides were then about even in potential effectiveness. But there was of course this very marked difference—the Partisans were doing everything possible to direct most of their strength against the Axis and the quislings, while Mikhailovich was bent on directing the preponderance of his against the Partisans, and the rest against the Ustashi.

The Partisan spirit was something the Nazis wrote home about. Kurt Neher, a war correspondent, sent to his paper, miscalled *Neue Ordnung* (New Order), an article describing a battle in the Kozara Mountain district of Bosnia, three paragraphs of which are worth quoting:

"At two o'clock one night, at our right wing, scarcely two hundred feet from our position, men were clutched together body to body, groaning wildly. The first wave of assailants approached through underbrush and tall grass to within fifteen feet of us. The insurgents [the Nazis designation for Yugoslav guerrillas] clawed the muzzles of our machine guns before there was time to fire even one shot, and they held on even when our bullets and grenades began literally to tear them to shreds.

"Several fists torn from arms was all that remained on the shining machine-gun muzzles. The frontal positions were awakened by then. The insurgents started to beat off our attacks, assailing our trenches and covers. They sneaked like cats while holding their bayonets between their teeth. . . . It was now that the most terrible episode began. A woman gave the first shout, monotonous, penetrating. Others, hundreds of men, women and young boys took up this yell, hurling it in the face of our soldiers like the battle cry of a primitive tribe.

"Some fought their way through only to be killed at the barbed wire. The screaming of women continued until 4 o'clock. The first light of day stopped the nightmare. One hundred twenty-seven corpses were suspended on the barbed wire. Far away we heard the lowing of cattle the insurgents drove before them while retreating in the direction of the Kozara Mountains. . . ."

In late spring and early summer of '42, about the time that Mikhailovichevtsi and Nedich bands and the anti-guerrillas were doing

their best to exterminate the Partisans in Serbia and western Bosnia, Slovenian Partisans made large-scale forays into Italy. Their units included thousands of *Primortsi,* people who had emigrated into Yugoslav Slovenia from the so-called Julian March, the preponderantly Slovenian region which Britain and France had given to Italy in 1915. While on these forays, the Partisans attacked trains coming from Lublyana carrying Slovenians into forced labor or concentration camps in Italy, and they freed the prisoners who then joined their ranks. They had on their side the entire Slovenian and Croatian populations in the hinterland of Trieste and in Istria: for the pro-Partisan Soviet Union was the only Allied power which had expressed itself as favoring the inclusion of those Slavic regions in a future Yugoslav state. On July 30 and August 1, '43, during the confusion in Italy following the downfall of Mussolini, they staged a brief invasion of the region around Udine (Videm) and of northern Istria.

Through most of '42 in parts of Slovenia, Partisans controlled the money and food-rationing systems. In mountain caves and shepherds' huts they published newspapers and maintained schools and hospitals. They seized Italian supply trains bound for Russia. In fact, this was their chief means of providing themselves with arms, munitions, food, clothing and medicine.

Late in October '42 a Moscow dispatch reported that Partisans had killed a Nazi general who led an attack against them, apparently in northern Slovenia.

In the Slovenian Partisan army were a good many foreigners, including Australians and New Zealanders—escaped prisoners of war whom the Germans had captured in Greece.

Down in the Slovenian woods reaching toward Croatia the Partisans had the cooperation of a small army of deserters from the German army who balked at fighting Russia and now operated under the flag of the Weimar Republic.

The situation was full of such strange factors.

The information coming to me showed that during a good part of the summer of '42 the Partisans controlled the whole of "Italian-occupied" Slovenia except the strongly garrisoned cities and larger towns. Most of these urban populations, however, were also in the LF or in sympathy with it. In Lublyana, pro-Partisan sentiment was shared by between eighty and ninety percent of the people. It was so strong that it took seventy thousand Italians to hold the city in check —one soldier for nearly every inhabitant, for Lublyana's normal population is only a little over eighty thousand. But even this huge

force had trouble with the rebellious inhabitants. Executing hostages by the score had little effect. Young men and women were joining people like Bah-tch and Bozha who had preceded them into the fight against the Fascists and the "White Guards" organized by the old-line Slovenian politicians collaborating with the enemy. Disguised Partisan assassination teams operated in the city, killing the would-be collaborators. Finally the Italian commander found it necessary to put barbed wire all around the town. His idea apparently was to seal it hermetically. Peasant women from the surrounding country were not allowed to deliver milk or laundry within the city. They had to pass it through a hole in the barbed-wire fence, which had a Fascist sentry every hundred feet. Yet Partisans and secret LF agents found their way in and out of Lublyana anyhow.

There was a terrific determination in the LF led by Josip Vidmar and Boris Kidrich to prevent, at no matter what cost, even the shadow of an appearance of Slovenia's collaboration with the enemy.

Under the circumstances, this could be done best, with the highest promise of success, by getting as many Slovenians as possible to pit themselves against the enemy; by being tough-minded and ruthless in this policy and doing everything possible to keep the LF and its Partisan forces uppermost. Accordingly, the Executive Committee of the Liberation Front of the Slovenian People announced in the Partisan document dated May 15, '42, from which I have already quoted, that it would fill with Partisan bullets "any one who is proved to have attempted to form any armed units aside from Partisan organizations which are under the command of the general headquarters of the Slovenian Partisan Units." And as we have seen in the diary notes, the Committee then proceeded to shoot all such individuals after their chief tribunal of justice had sentenced them to death.

Death in Front of the Church

DURING THE FATEFUL MONTHS BETWEEN THE AUTUMN OF '41 and spring of '42 two leading men in Lublyana were assassinated. One was Dr. Marko Natlachen, a lawyer and the last governor of Slovenia before the Axis occupation. The other was the Reverend Lambert Ehrlich, a Catholic priest and a professor of ethnology and comparative religion at the university.

In mid-morning on October 5, '41, two young men dressed as priests came to the Natlachen residence with a letter of introduction. Having entered into collaboration with the occupying Italian authority, the ex-governor knew his life was in danger and he saw few people. His servant, however, had a deep respect for clerical garb and led the visitors unquestioningly to his master's room. But before Natlachen had a chance to take the "letter of introduction" out of the envelope the "priests" drew revolvers and killed him. The "letter" was his death sentence by the Executive Committee of the Liberation Front of Slovenia, signed "Boris Kidrich, Secretary." The assassins were of course Partisans. They got away despite all the efforts of the Italian military and the local civil authorities to apprehend them.

At eight o'clock in the morning of May 26, '42, after having celebrated Mass at seven according to his daily routine, the Reverend Dr. Ehrlich—accompanied by his altar-boy, a thirty-four-year-old student named Viktor Royits—stepped out of the little church of St. Cyril, which is part of the Academic Dormitory, an institution for poor university students under his personal control. The priest-professor and the altar-boy, who was also one of his secretaries and his bodyguard, started across the street when shots rang out and both dropped dead. Italian patrols immediately closed in on the assassins. One of them fought his way free, the other killed two Italians and wounded a third before he himself was killed. . . . In Ehrlich's mail

that morning, delivered after the *attentat,* was his death sentence, also signed "For the Liberation Front: Boris Kidrich, Secretary."

I first learned of these assassinations early the following autumn from a man I have already mentioned—Frants Snoy, a Slovenian minister without portfolio in the Yugoslav government-in-exile whom I had then known for about a year. He had left Yugoslavia with the rest of the fleeing government after the country's collapse and had arrived in New York *via* Palestine, Egypt and South Africa early in September '41. He was a member of the Royal Yugoslav Delegation which included two other portfolio-less ministers who had agreed to go on a mission to the United States, while the rest of the exiled regime with the boy-king went to London.

Mr. Snoy looked me up in New York the day he arrived. His English was scant, this was his first visit to America, and he hoped I would help him find his way around. I said I would of course. And thus began one of my most interesting, instructive and subtly unpleasant relationships during '41-'43.

His baldness and weight made Snoy look older than his thirty-nine years. He had an energetic but disciplined and agreeable manner—at least on first impression. He spoke well in a controlled vibrant voice.

He came from a substantial peasant family in a small Slovenian town. His schooling had been limited, but he was naturally able, hard-working and very ambitious, bound to push his way ahead. Relatively well-off before the war, he regarded himself proudly as a kind of self-made man. His ministerial pay was eight hundred dollars a month and he could draw an additional thousand a month for "national" expenses. He had a fine apartment on Central Park South. His wife and three sons to whom he was deeply devoted he had had to leave behind in Lublyana.

He was a former official of a cooperative bank, an extremely devout Catholic, and one of the younger leaders of the SPP—Slovenian People's Party. Its opponents, the Liberals, Progressives and others, called it the Clerical party because most of its top men were priests and its setup and policy were closely integrated with the ecclesiastical organization and authority in Slovenia.

Personally, I believe separation of church and state to be an absolute prerequisite of modern civilization. I object to the clergy of any faith in any country holding positions of political leadership; I think it is bad for both religion and politics. And I am anti-Clerical on that basis in reference to Slovenia or any other country.

I think Minister Snoy had a rough idea of my views about such matters before he came to see me, but it did not seem to bother him. On my side, I noticed that he lacked some of the refinements of thought, feeling, speech and manners that I had found delightful in so many of the Slovenians I had met in Yugoslavia, several of whom were Clericals. His personality, however, was anything but unpleasant. He talked interestingly of his long voyage and of the disastrous events in Yugoslavia early in '41. And for about a year his being a Clerical politician was not terribly important to me.

He assured me repeatedly that he did not come to America as an SPP leader but as a Slovenian patriot, and that as a minister of the Yugoslav state he was trying to represent the interests and viewpoints of all the Slovenians in Europe. This sounded all right and at first it didn't occur to me to question it. The assurances seemed to come too often; but then I thought that perhaps he was just a little nervous, a stranger in a strange land, and eager that I should believe him.

His principal task in the United States—both personally and as a member of the Royal Yugoslav Delegation, which opened the Royal Yugoslav Information Center on Fifth Avenue—would be, he averred, to inform "our Slovenian emigrants here," as well as the American people generally and their important government officials, of the Yugoslavs' and especially the Slovenians' plight in their tragic homeland. And here was where he needed my help—smiling, I thought, a bit uneasily the first time he brought this up.

He had introductions, he said, to pastors of Slovenian-immigrant parishes in different parts of the United States most of whom were more or less Clerical so far as politics in the old country were concerned. And he asked me if I would put him in touch with other Slovenian Americans who were either non- or anti-Clerical. He kept telling me that in occupied Slovenia the clearest tendency was away from the old bitter split between Clericals and Liberals. Did I not think that Slovenian Americans too would unite to do what they could toward a better future for Slovenia and Yugoslavia? Conscious of the various schisms in the "Slovenian colonies," I said I didn't know. He recalled what Slovenian and other South-Slavic immigrants in the United States had done in 1914-'18 toward the creation of Yugoslavia, and hoped they would help again in its re-creation after this war.

There was nothing in Mr. Snoy's request that anyone could possibly have regarded as counter to the Slovenian Americans' loyalty and duty to the United States. On the contrary, everything he said was in

line with the American policy developing late in '41 and, too, with the traditional and natural concern most immigrant groups feel for their "old countries" in times of extreme crisis. So I put him in touch with the non- and anti-Clerical elements in the Slovenian-immigrant group, and they called meetings and listened to him. Also I introduced him to United States officials in Washington and New York who occasionally approached me on matters pertaining to Yugoslavia, and a few of them told me they found some of his information very valuable. He was continually in touch with people in occupied Slovenia long before anyone else in America succeeded in establishing regular communication with any part of Yugoslavia.

Mr. Snoy also wanted me to begin writing articles which, along with the current Mikhailovich publicity, would keep Slovenia and Yugoslavia as a whole in the American eye. But I disappointed him. For a long time I could not write anything about my native country, although I really wanted to, mainly because he—an official, a specially interested person—was asking me to. It is hard for me to turn out material upon request even if I believe in the cause. Fearing he might not understand this, I did not try to explain to Snoy.

I met him as often as he wished. I did not really dislike him. I learned many things from him; he was always interesting. Here was a Slovenian politician—a Yugoslav, a Balkan, a European politician; a manipulator of wrongs with many good intentions, an energetic referee in futility—whom I was able to study at close hand.

I think that after puzzling over my failure to oblige him as a writer the minister finally concluded that I had become too American to serve his purpose with a single mind and he tried not to appear to push me.

Before we got to this point, however, Mr. Snoy hoped for a while that my anti-Clericalism was not very firm—that he might even convert me. Certainly I was not rabidly anti-Clerical, I had never taken part in Slovenian or Yugoslav politics, and I was not what he would call a Liberal in the Slovenian sense, in fact not even a pro-Liberal. Actually I was against all pre-war European politicians on general principles; but he did not know this. So he talked to me of his—"our"—party's fine record in Slovenian life (many details of which doubtless were true from any point of view) and I could not help perceiving that in spite of his professions to the contrary, he was first of all a *klerikalets*, a loyal party man, to whom Clericalism was practically identical with Slovenia.

Speaking of his superiors in party leadership, Minister Snoy main-

tained a balance between enthusiasm and reverence. He told me how the late Yanez Krek, a priest, had furthered the "Yugoslav idea" while Slovenia was still under Austria. I knew about Krek, and that he was a great and a very good man. Snoy told me of the late Anton Koroshets, a priest who had played a big role in bringing Yugoslavia into existence in 1918, who had been premier, vice-premier and minister of the interior in Belgrade several times before his death in '40, and had for twenty years been widely publicized as a great statesman in the Catholic press the world over. And of the late Anton Kulovets, another priest, Koroshets' successor as party head, who had been the Slovenian vice-premier in the Yugoslav government when the Stukas struck at Belgrade, and had been killed by one of the first bombs. And of Mikha Krek (no relation to Yanez), a layman, who had succeeded Kulovets in the vice-premiership and was now in London. And of Marko Natlachen who between '36 and '41 had made a fine record as an administrator while governor of Slovenia. And of the Reverend Dr. Ehrlich ——

For six years these men had continually dominated Slovenia's political scene which spread into the larger one of Yugoslavia. Minister Snoy did not mention that the SPP had come into power in the mid-'30s because it was willing to play along with Prince-Regent Paul and his first openly pro-Axis premier, Milan Stoyadinovich; and listening to his early lectures about his party, I did not trouble to bring it up. I was interested in him as a person, as a type, and the undercurrent of his discourses came through more freely without interruption.

I gathered that some of the politicos whom he so sympathetically sketched for me had greatly helped his advance in the party and in the Slovenian business world. But Snoy was especially warm about the Reverend Dr. Ehrlich, a man in his early sixties. Besides being a professor at the university, he was the party's advisor in "non-political" matters. I assumed the non-political matters were the broader spiritual and ideological matters which political parties have to keep up with. Dr. Ehrlich was also one of the moving spirits of the Slovenian section of the well-known international movement, Catholic Action. Also founder and leader of *Strazha,* The Guard, an organization of university students who were profoundly devoted to him; most of them attended his Mass at St. Cyril's every morning before going to school. . . . There was almost no end to the Reverend Doctor's achievements which his adherent laid out for me late in '41 and '42.

In Minister Snoy's mind the most regrettable thing about Dr. Ehrlich was that he had not been able to go into exile. He had been at the airdrome in Niksich, Herzegovina, when the government and lesser politicos were scrambling aboard planes which were to take them to Palestine and Egypt, but space was limited and some got left behind—Ehrlich among them.

One day in January '42 the minister suddenly remarked how fine it would be if "there were a few more Slovenians in the United States and England who could present our Slovenian and Yugoslav cause in effective propaganda and who would also be helpful when peace came" or words to that effect. Sensing he had somebody definite in mind, I asked, "Who, for instance?"

"Dr. Ehrlich for one," said Snoy, then mentioned a few others—all priests.

"Well," I said, "is there any way of getting them out?"

He replied there was, but would not be specific about the method of bringing men out of Italian-held Slovenia and into England or America. Since they were all priests, I assumed they would have the assistance of an international ecclesiastical organization through which I knew Minister Snoy was communicating with people in Slovenia, no doubt with those very men. I imagined too that they would come by way of Italy and neutral Swedish, Portuguese, Argentine or Turkish vessels.

Then Snoy suggested that I try to find out in Washington if men like the Reverend Lambert Ehrlich would be admissible under the regulations governing the entry of political refugees and exiles.

The request intrigued me but I did nothing about it. The whole thing was too mysterious. Also every now and then I had begun to feel uneasy about the man. Not that I suspected anything which might be called disloyalty to the Allied cause; Mr. Snoy was definitely and vehemently pro-American and pro-British. But he and I were poles apart on other matters.

However, I became very much interested in the Reverend Lambert Ehrlich, scholar, leader of youth, non-politician who held the devotion of a politician. I asked other Slovenian exiles in New York about him. The Clericals all praised him to the skies; the Liberals and Progressives, on the other hand, had nothing good to say about him except that he was a very able organizer—a fact they deeply regretted.

Subsequently, a Slovenian-language newspaper in Cleveland, *Enakopravnost* (Equality), published extensive analyses of the Clerical

party, apparently based upon information received from Slovenia, which still later were corroborated by other sources. There were references to Lambert Ehrlich as a "clero-fascist"—a title applicable as well to most of the rest of the SPP leadership.

At that time—early February '42—no one in the United States with whom I was in touch had any idea of the sharp Right-Left rift in Yugoslavia which had begun six or seven months before; but some of us who knew something about the country occasionally wondered about the political and ideological crosscurrents within the Yugoslav resistance movement. I also began to wonder about Minister Snoy's too-frequent assurances to me that internal politics had taken a holiday in Slovenia. Then I became quite sure that either he was mistaken or he was deliberately not telling me everything he knew.

The anti-Clerical analyses of the SPP showed a shrewdly organized Tammany Hall. It had many virtues and direct attractions for people floundering in a tangle of personal and communal problems, especially for those who were religiously inclined. At its core, however, the Clerical party was just another political-power outfit and, under its pious verbiage, as cynical as any. This anti-Clerical picture was of course biased, but it was a frank bias issuing from a sense of outrage; and for my part I accepted it as essentially true. It fitted in with much and clashed with nothing I knew about Slovenian and Yugoslav politics.

In the 1910s, while led by the Reverend Yanez Krek—a great and good man by any standards—the SPP was a sound factor in the life of the Slovenian people. In addition to advancing the "Yugoslav idea" it helped to establish excellent cooperatives in many parts of the country.

Monsignor Anton Koroshets, Krek's successor as party leader, was a much lesser man but, following his predecessor's spade work, he took a fairly decent part in the not too inspiring scramble for power among politicians which attended the birth of Yugoslavia. From then on, however, the SPP was consistently opportunistic and reactionary. Whenever the pan-Serbian crowd in Belgrade was about to pull an underhanded, frustrating trick on the Croatian Peasant or Serbian Democratic or Independent Agrarian parties, which represented the people, Father Koroshets was eager to join in the anti-democratic business. And he did join on at least half a dozen crucial occasions.

Out to entrench his party in Slovenia and swell its influence in

Yugoslav politics, the padre was ready night and day to engage in political shenanigans which smelled from any sort of honest spiritual or intellectual position. But of course he could always rationalize about his SPP opportunism as high-minded expediency or as the patriotic long view still too obscure in its operational outline to be visible to scoffers.

In the late '20s, as minister of the interior, Koroshets was officially responsible for the activities of the secret political police, including the extreme terror practiced in the Belgrade Glavnyacha.

Koroshets helped King Alexander in many ways to kill what little democracy there was in Yugoslavia up to 1929 and thus "qualified" for the post of prime minister under the newly established royal dictatorship. Alexander, however, could not stand having Catholic priests too close to him for long. He soon fired Koroshets and flung the SPP aside. He even interned the ex-premier on an island in the Adriatic (where I happened to come across him in the fall of '32: a pudgy man of medium height, in his mid-fifties, who liked to eat well but had to watch his diet because of Bright's disease, of which he died in '40).

When in mid-October '34 the assassinated Alexander was brought home on a warship from Marseilles and placed on a catafalque on the quay in Split, Monsignor Koroshets emerged from his island internment to "pray over my King," which he did with a clear manifestation of his sense of drama. It was the correct and priestly thing to do; it was also astute politically.

Alexander's cousin, Prince Paul—born in Russia, brought up in Italy, educated in England; a character out of Dostoievski and E. Phillips Oppenheim—became head of the Regency which the late King had appointed to rule in case of his death in the name of his young son Peter. A weak conniving man contemptuous of peasant Yugoslavia, a man whose strongest feelings issued from fear of Bolshevism, Paul was fiercely anti-Red. So was Koroshets; so were all the other top Slovenian Clericals.

The priest-politico promptly got back into the government . . . and the SPP held important ministerial positions in Belgrade from the middle '30s till the Axis struck in '41. During those years they attained complete control of Slovenia. They were in office all through the openly pro-Axis Stoyadinovich period as well as through the appeasement regime of Premier Tsvetkovich and Foreign Minister Tsintsar-Markovich. Then they got into the "revolutionary" govern-

ment of General Simovich, although on March 22, while still in the Tsvetkovich cabinet, Krek had voted with the majority of the appeasement crowd in favor of signing the Axis pact.

From '35 until they decided to ditch him in '41, the Slovenian Clerical ministers were closer to the Prince-Regent than anyone else outside his family except Premier Stoyadinovich. Paul was not a Catholic, in fact he sneered wearily at all religion, but he respected good organization and knew a dependable political outfit when he saw one. All through the six years of the Regency he kept strengthening the Clericals politically. Under the continual "non-political" tutelage of their ideological leader, the Reverend Dr. Ehrlich, they were the most reliable party in the matter of Bolshevism. Paul's friendliness is also explainable on a lesser count. He owned a large estate in Slovenia, the only part of Yugoslavia he liked.

The undemocratic setup in Yugoslavia started by Alexander gave Paul no trouble in finding ways and means to help his Clerical friends. He had the final word over the state budget and could push vast sums into channels which they controlled. For example, in '36, owing to the long depression, all Slovenian cooperatives were in a bad way. But Anton Koroshets and Mikha Krek—working from Belgrade through their party sidekicks in Lublyana, notably Governor Natlachen, whom they had put into office—saw to it that nearly all monies allotted to Slovenia for the relief of cooperatives were given to SPP-dominated organizations, in most cases run by parish priests. Cooperatives under Liberal, Progressive or Social-Democratic control got next to nothing; most of them fell by the wayside or just barely kept going while the SPP outfits boomed. The Clericals thus acquired a politico-economic stranglehold on the country and in the '38 elections —forced on Paul and Stoyadinovich by the rising tide of democratic sentiment in the rest of Yugoslavia—they had no difficulty in manipulating the votes of a large number of bewildered, depression-weary peasants.

Tammany-like, the SPP during '35-'41 used old and tested methods of controlling the jobs and politics of some ten thousand state employees. Wherever it could be done non-Clericals were displaced by Clericals. When a Liberal or Leftist with local political standing could not simply be kicked out on his ear, Natlachen and his Lublyana colleagues got Belgrade to transfer him to Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro or Herzegovina where, since no one knew about his Slovenian standing, he was politically innocuous.

A sharp-faced man in his fifties, Marko Natlachen was an able

executive; however, his real job as governor of Slovenia was to carry out the political will of his priest superiors, the Reverend Anton Korôshets and Anton Kulovets, and of Mikha Krek, who sat in authority in Belgrade; and to follow the "non-political" line drawn by his spiritual mentor, the Reverend Professor Ehrlich. Natlachen was the most conspicuous figure in Lublyana and by '39 people began to refer to him as "the uncrowned king of Slovenia." He could "do anything," and did. In one sudden swoop he shifted four hundred teachers who were not entirely pro-SPP. He moved professors and judges all around the country. No one could do anything about it. He was backed by Belgrade.

Frants Snoy was one of Natlachen's assistants in practical, hard-boiled economic and political matters. But the "non-political" Father Ehrlich was the head of the local Clerical brain trust, which included several other priests, all subordinate to the Bishop of Lublyana. And, more important still, Ehrlich was in spiritual command of The Guard, the Academic Dormitory, Catholic Action and its rural subsidiary movement *Slovenski Fantyé* (Slovenian Young Men), which had been started to rival the old anti-Clerical gymnastic organization *Sokoli* (Falcons).

The Academic Dormitory was a charity institution for extremely poor religious students. It was also the main recruiting station for and the barracks of The Guard, which Ehrlich and Natlachen began to make use of late in the '30s when they set out to transform the University of Lublyana from a fairly liberal institution into a Clerical stronghold. Ehrlich's fanatic young "spiritual storm troopers" spied upon and denounced Leftist students and professors. Everywhere there was endless intimidation. In the parishes and villages Slovenski Fantyé began to denounce the Sokoli as Communists. In fact the label "Communist" began to be stuck onto pretty nearly everyone who wasn't wholeheartedly with the SPP.

In its career as Slovenia's foremost educational center the University of Lublyana has given only three honorary degrees—the third was bestowed with extreme reluctance upon the Reverend Anton Koroshets under pressure from Governor Natlachen, who controlled the budget, and the Reverend Dr. Ehrlich. On the day of the presentation ceremony the police, under Natlachen's control, arrested and imprisoned hundreds of non-Clerical students to prevent an anti-Koroshets demonstration which might have outdone the pro-Koroshets demonstration led by the Reverend Dr. Ehrlich's Guard. Among

the imprisoned students were sons of professors who were expected to march in the academic cortège honoring the Honorary Doctor.

There were many more like incidents in Slovenia during the half-dozen years preceding the Nazi-Fascist occupation.

But the worst was the Concordat episode in '38. With the approval of Prince-Regent Paul, the government of Premier Stoyadinovich and Vice-Premier Koroshets proposed that Yugoslavia strengthen diplomatic relations with the Vatican. This at once aroused the whole Orthodox Church; it stirred the nine-hundred-year-old Catholic-Orthodox antagonism in the Balkans, widening the cleavage between the two religions and creating a crisis that touched off some of the deepest emotions in Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian national life.

Paul, Koroshets and Stoyadinovich must have known that would happen. Then why did they propose it?

First of all the Concordat was an idea the Axis gave to Premier Stoyadinovich, its chief agent in the unhappy country, to play with. Not that the Nazis and Fascists were interested in diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Yugoslavia. Their purpose was to soften up the country in every possible way; and they adroitly seized on religious cleavage.

It is not surprising that Stoyadinovich and Paul were ready to serve the Axis in this matter. Both of them thought that the Hitler-initiated anti-Comintern pact was a master-stroke of diplomacy; and they saw eye to eye with Germany and Italy on other points as well.

It cannot be said, however, that Koroshets and other top-flight Clericals were out-and-out pro-Axis. They were as anti-Communist as was Hitler, but they were also anti-Italian, for Italy held a half million Slovenians along with the city and port of Trieste which they felt belonged to Slovenia. Then—what . . . why? Perhaps the explanation is to be sought in an event which closely followed the Concordat proposal and which ripped the country all along its seams. It had to do with the so-called Religious Fund. Its history goes back to Emperor Joseph II of Austria, who created it with income accruing from forest lands laid aside to support priests and teachers of religion. After the collapse of Austria the income from those lands was taken over by the Yugoslav state, which then paid the priests. Now in '39, however, Belgrade transferred the administration of the Religious Fund to the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Lublyana. This involved the control of a vast domain of forest areas in the Triglav-Bohin region of northern Slovenia. One can only assume that there was a "deal"; that Vice-Premier Koroshets cooperated with the pro-

Axis prince-regent and the pro-Axis premier in return for the court decision benefiting his church and desired by his Bishop.

I knew most of these things when I learned in June '42 that Marko Natlachen had headed a delegation of prewar politicians who, soon after the Italians occupied Lower Slovenia, had gone to pay their respects and express their "loyalty" to the King of Italy, the Duce and the Pope. On his return from Italy Natlachen was elected president of the SPP. This did not surprise me but I thought it outrageous, and I asked Frants Snoy about it.

He admitted that the delegation's trip to Italy was "probably" a mistake. It "certainly" was a mistake—a political one, he meant—to have used the word "loyalty" in their address to the Italian rulers. But Snoy was quick to extenuate his political colleagues. "Don't imagine," he said sharply, "that they went to Italy gladly. They went there to placate the Italians so their occupation forces would remain less brutal than the Germans in Upper Slovenia. They had the best of intentions. . . ."

I told him the extenuation did not impress me at all; the episode was shameful for Slovenia.

This conversation caused a strain in our relations, but we continued to meet—I wanted to keep up with his information from Yugoslavia, and I imagine he still hoped I might be useful to him.

When I began to learn about Partisan resistance, which the general press was crediting to Mikhailovich's Chetniks, and indicated to Snoy that it was good news, he retorted that the Partisans were Communists who were provoking the Italians to horrible retaliations against the villagers. We had some difficult moments. But I controlled myself—the man was interesting, a perfect specimen of a species which could not yet be disregarded. And besides wanting to study him, I was anxious to keep an eye on him. I knew he was sending information to American officials to whom I had introduced him—information obviously intended to give the impression that anti-Italian resistance in Slovenia was not so much resistance as Communist criminality. He followed the same procedure in preparing releases for the general American and the Slovenian-language press which were sent out by the Royal Yugoslav Information Center.

Although the Natlachen assassination occurred in October '41 and Snoy probably heard of it within three months, he did not make his knowledge public till much later. He did not tell me about it till we began to quarrel about the Partisans. Then he flung it at me as if to

say, "This is what the people you regard so highly are doing—killing our leading men!"

Snoy and I argued about it. I was instinctively shocked and grieved that this kind of death by violence was beginning to happen in my native Slovenia. At the same time I knew that it was inevitable. It was partly an outgrowth of years of Clerical politics which had culminated in Natlachen's trip to Rome and his subsequent election to the presidency of the SPP. Snoy was furious at my inability to see that the killing of Natlachen was not a political assassination but a downright crime committed by godless, bloodthirsty Communist murderers who called themselves Partisans.

I said, "Mr. Snoy, you talk about the killer of Natlachen the way Hitler talks of Russian soldiers who are killing Nazis. To Hitler the Russian is a criminal. To Russians, he is a soldier, sometimes a hero. I feel that way about the Russian soldier who is killing Nazis whether or not he is a Communist. I feel that way also about the young men who disguised themselves as priests in order to get close enough to Natlachen to kill him. To me, they are soldiers, Partisans. Neither you nor I know if they are Communists. But they are Partisans, not criminals."

For an instant Snoy's large face went purple with rage. I wondered: was he too thinking that if we were in Slovenia instead of New York we might be gunning for each other? He changed the subject. But soon after, a pro-Clerical Slovenian-language newspaper, *Amerishka Domovina* (American Homeland), published in Cleveland, which used Snoy's material, began to attack the "Communist criminals" in Slovenia and take side-swipes at pro-Partisan Americans of Slovenian origin.

Snoy learned of the Ehrlich killing some weeks before a batch of material about it reached me through another source. Still hopeful (or so I think) that I might not stray too far into pro-Partisanism, or that his news might finally shock me out of it, he telephoned me: could he come to see me? When he came, he said in a tightly held-in voice:

"They killed Dr. Ehrlich."

"Who?" I asked.

"The Communists of course."

"You mean the Partisans."

"I mean the Communists. They sentenced him to death." Then he told me the details of the shooting. "And right in front of the church!" he said in that low, strained voice.

"To you, Mr. Snoy," I said, "that may be the most important fact. To me, it is not inconceivable that a clergyman, even a strictly 'non-political' one like Dr. Ehrlich, might do something in a revolutionary situation that would logically, from the revolutionary angle, provoke someone to shoot him—even in front of a church. Such things happened in other revolutions. And what is going on in Slovenia, in addition to resistance against the Axis, *is* revolution."

"They murdered him," he said, "because he was a determined anti-Communist in every fiber of his being."

I said, "I don't know all the facts surrounding the assassination. But from what you have told me I think it is safe to assume that if he was 'a determined anti-Communist in every fiber of his being,' and if he was part of the element that journeyed to Rome and presumed to express Slovenian 'loyalty' to Victor Emmanuel and Benito Mussolini, he was also at least partly pro-Axis. As such he was an enemy from where I stand—this man whom last winter you wanted me to help you bring to the United States or England."

After this I saw Snoy less and less often. Now I had a full picture of him. He unquestionably favored an Allied, that is, Anglo-American, victory. He read with excitement about the Russians' stand at Stalingrad, but his feelings were mixed. He was with the Russians insofar as he was able to think of them as Russians, but Hitler would have welcomed his feelings when he thought of them as Communists who might get to the Balkans ahead of the British and American armies. In this he personified a sizable chunk of the dreadful confusion in the contemporary world. When he heard Americans exclaim over the heroism of the South-Slavic guerrilla fighters, who *he* knew were nearly all Partisans, he seemed to glow with pride. Yet, as I watched him, I knew that if he were in Slovenia, where he would have to commit himself in action, he would not be far behind the Natlachen-Ehrlich example even if he did not fully approve of it.

I despised him politically, as did all anti-Clerical Slovenian Americans who knew him at all well. But I could not help feeling sorry for him personally—especially after I learned from a report in November '42 that his fifteen-year-old son was a Partisan or pro-Partisan whom the Italians had put into a concentration camp. Probably the boy's life was saved only because he was his father's son.

Snoy aged greatly during '42 and the first half of '43, when I ceased meeting with him. People who saw him often told me he spent much of his time in church and prayed a great deal in his room.

The batch of reports from Slovenia covered the Natlachen and Ehrlich assassinations from both the anti-Partisan and Partisan sides. The notes on Natlachen were scant, for by the time people in occupied Yugoslavia began to send out the material which eventually reached me the shooting of the ex-governor was ancient history; but the priest had just been killed.

In a tearsheet from the Lublyana daily *Slovenets*, formerly the most important SPP organ, now still Clerical in tone but under Italian control, were long articles glorifying the Reverend Dr. Ehrlich as "a martyr in the cause of all that is commendable and worthy in Slovenian life." The pieces were reminiscent of what Snoy had said. The assassins were referred to as "Red criminal terrorists . . . Communist perverts . . . anti-Slovenian . . . godless agents of the Comintern." One article ended: "For ten years he was the most fearless fighter on the ramparts defending the principles of Jesus Christ against the vicious onslaughts of the unspeakable Communists. Now they have gone all the way and—killed him, a priest, in front of his church. . . . The most generous of men, he never sat down alone to a meal. Poor students were always around him. He emptied his pockets to them and left no wealth."

Slovenets had nothing to say of the Italian reaction to Ehrlich's violent death. That part of the story was in the LF documents and the more or less objective reports. The Fascist commander in Lublyana was apparently enraged by the incident. The furious search for the escaped assassin stretched through several days. As in the Natlachen case eight months before, Fascists executed scores of hostages and sent into concentration camps hundreds of Lublyanchani. "Italian terror reached a climax the day before the funeral," which was attended by "many Italians in uniform, thousands of Ehrlich's followers mingling with still more thousands of secret anti-Ehrlichites and pro-Partisans who did not want to miss the occasion. No doubt many were there to celebrate."

There were two photographs—one of Ehrlich lying in a puddle of blood in the street, the other of Ehrlich laid out in the Academic Dormitory where members of The Guard kept vigil around him.

There were several analyses of the background of the episode, all going back at least to '36. They confirmed that under Ehrlich's guidance the SPP record was violently anti-Communist and that Ehrlich had consistently attacked as Communists people who were merely anti-Clerical—opposed to priest politicians.

The intra-Slovenian struggle for the control of the university

and the student movements in Lublyana had of course continued under the Italian occupation. By March '42 it had resolved itself into two sharply opposed camps—the LF and Ehrlich's Guard, which in the rural regions was integrated with Slovenski Fantyé. The Partisan label for both was "the White Guard."

In view of what had gone before, the current situation was to be expected. The great majority of young people, and many older ones, simply could not tolerate collaboration with the Italians. It was collaboration regardless of the apologetics the Ehlrich group had built up around it. In turn, the Ehrlichites would not, perhaps could not, retreat. Ehrlich himself was a fanatic; he saw Red in everything that did not carry his okay; and he had, for all practical purposes, okayed the Italians. At the same time, of course, he insisted he was a patriot thinking only of Slovenia—exactly what Snoy and all the old-line Clericals thought of themselves and each other.

The Fascist party in Italy had maintained for twenty-odd years two student auxiliary organizations—*Gioventia Italiana Littorio* for secondary schools, *Gruppo Universitario Fascista* for colleges and universities. And after Mussolini and King Victor Emmanuel had officially "annexed" Lower Slovenia to their Italian "empire," Fascismo decided that all Slovenian students, now promoted to be Italians, must join GIL or GUF. Most of the boys and girls in Lublyana, including Clerical students who were not Ehrlichites, including in fact Frants Snoy's young son, had a different idea. And even of the Ehrlich crowd only the well-disciplined Guard was ready to go along with his Fascist scheme; through the Reverend Dr. Ehrlich, the Italian organizers had played on their Catholicism and anti-Communism.

Early in May '42 a kind of showdown began which of course the Italian manipulators of the German "technique of depopulation" did not neglect to foment. To begin with, The Guard acted as informers to the Italians, as it had previously to the Clerical leaders. The Italians then seized pro-LF boys and dragged them off to concentration camps in Italy. On May 20, for instance, less than a week before the Ehrlich assassination, the Fascists raided the Yeglich Dormitory and picked up all the students, most of whom belonged to a progressive, anti-Guard wing of the Catholic youth movement. The next day the same thing happened in an institution called the Academic College, where the preponderance of youngsters was leftist. Except for a total of nine boys, both these groups—numbering hundreds—were herded into box-cars and hauled off to Italy.

Indignation in Lublyana was reaching the desperation point. Around town appeared tiny leaflets with a few lines of verse from a poem written by Oton Zupanchich twenty-odd years before:

"O ye strings without tone! O ye poor cracked vessels unfit to hold anything but dead rubbish! . . . O ye driblets of soured wine! The nation shall spew you out.—"

Then Ehrlich and his bodyguard-secretary-altar-boy, Viktor Royits, were dropped by Partisan bullets.

The next day from its secret headquarters the Slovenian People's LF issued a statement:

"On May 26, following a death sentence passed by the Executive Committee of the LF in Slovenia, there was executed in the city of Lublyana the leading traitor to the Slovenian nation, the initiator [with Natlachen, *et al.*] of the political and police collaboration with the occupation of all reactionary elements, the organizer of terroristic and denunciatory bands serving the enemies of our people—Dr. Lambert Ehrlich.

"Ehrlich was part of a clique within the unsound section of our prewar national life whose constant purpose was only to strengthen its strategic hold on the people's life. This clique never considered the wider interests of our country. Utterly cynical, its sole ambition was power over our culture, politics and religion. . . . Accordingly, the clique always looked with hostile eyes upon all democratic movements and consistently sought and found alliances with reaction elsewhere in Yugoslavia and with clero-fascists in pre-*Anschluss* Austria. . . . Up to the very moment preceding the anti-appeasement revolution in Yugoslavia, the Clerical clique, of which Ehrlich was prime mover, cooperated with German Nazism and Italian Fascism in Belgrade, and therefore shares responsibility for the overwhelming catastrophe that befell Yugoslavia. . . .

"To prevent the Slovenian masses from seeking a better future than has been our lot hitherto, this cynical clique openly entered the service of the occupationists and has been trampling on our nation's most sacred values and interests. . . . This band, under Dr. Ehrlich's spiritual leadership, has stopped at nothing to frustrate all that is fine and glorious in the present travail of our people which we aspire to translate into better times.

"The Slovenian LF defines Dr. Ehrlich's specific crimes against our nation thus:

"*1.* As its spiritual leader, he put his infamous Guard at the disposal of the occupation. . . .

"*2.* In his own person, Dr. Ehrlich perpetrated these anti-national, anti-liberation acts:

"*a*) In his paper *Svobodna Sloveniya* [Free Slovenia] Ehrlich wrote attacks on individuals which then resulted in their arrest by Italians. For example, he accused teacher Zagar of being a Partisan commander; whereupon the Italians seized Zagar's family in Lublyana and inhumanly tortured his young daughter.

"*b*) In close contact with the Italian command, Ehrlich had regular meetings with Major Bruchetti of the Carabinieri [one of the Italian officers who attended his funeral]. On many occasions during examinations by Italian officials LF people have seen on their desks envelopes marked 'Dr. Ehrlich.'

"*c*) The seizure by Italians of the students living in the Yeglich Dormitory is directly traceable to Ehrlich through his Guard.

"*d*) The death of hundreds of hostages is attributed to the fact that Ehrlich or his Guard gave their names to the Italians.

"Lambert Ehrlich has now been meted out a punishment suitable to his crimes in a way that should warn others engaged in similar activity. Executed with him was Viktor Royits, a member of The Guard and his co-worker in all the above-listed crimes. . . .

"Issued by the Information Service of the Liberation Front on this 27th day of May 1942:

"*Death to Fascism! Liberty to the People!*"

Ehrlich's death sentence, as I have mentioned, was signed by Boris Kidrich, in whose behalf Ehrlich had interceded with Chancellor Schuschnigg at the request of his father when he was in prison in Austria.

During '42 the Liberation Front's Partisans in Slovenia "executed" thirteen priests besides the Reverend Lambert Ehrlich.

On the other hand, some Slovenian Catholic priests favored the LF. A few were in the mountains with the Partisans, apparently as chaplains ministering to large numbers of young Catholics who used to be a minority faction of the SPP and who were closer to Moscow than to the Vatican on social and economic questions.

My guess is that this faction was led by a group of intellectuals which had begun to form among university students in Lublyana in the late '30s. Its ideology and program were based on the writings of Jacques Maritain, a Frenchman who in 1940 came to the United States as a refugee and later taught at Columbia University, and who some few years before had emerged as Europe's—perhaps the

world's—leading lay Catholic philosopher with a liberal, almost radical, slant.

Maritain expressed that slant very eloquently in a lecture he delivered in February '43 at Freedom House in New York City in which he showed a profound understanding of the European problem. The European peoples, he said, "consider the particular features given to private ownership and free enterprise by capitalism to be already things of the past. . . . Europe aspires to a new civilization . . . in which each human person may enjoy social as well as political freedom and the working classes may reach their historic coming of age. Spiritually, the European peoples feel more or less obscurely that a new constructive impulse is possible only if Christianity frees itself from any encroachments by the human interests of ruling classes now morally bankrupt. . . ."

One report I received in October '42 told of a solemn Mass in a forest attended by "several thousand Slovenian Partisans." And I recalled a conversation I had had with Boris Kidrich in '32 or '33. He was anti-Clerical of course; he hated the politics and the person of Monsignor Koroshets. But to my surprise Boris was not especially anti-Catholic in a religious sense. He was not impressed by the Marxian description of religion as "the opium of the people." Disinclined to complicate his philosophy with it, he seemed to think that religion was a detail which would take care of itself, or would be modified by the impending collapse of Western civilization in Europe and the ensuing revolutionary developments.

Hot Blood and Red

THE LIBERATION FRONT WITH PARTIZANSTVO AS ITS HEART HAD its organizational inception in Slovenia. As a political movement it crystallized earlier there than elsewhere in the country, although big-scale resistance, as previously shown, developed first in Serbia and Montenegro and in the Serbian sections of Bosnia and Herzegovina. But the other regions were not far behind in forming LF committees whose pattern resembled the Vidmar-Kidrich setup, including both non-Communists and Communists, and serving as political guides of the Partisans and their supporters in the cities and towns.

Eventually, the non-Slovenian LF committees, covering the several regions, were brought together under an over-all Yugoslav LF Committee. This development got under way late in '41, when "its isolated detachments already numbered between eighty and a hundred thousand fighters," according to the October 25, '42 *Ogonek* (Flame), a weekly journal published in Moscow. "By the end of the year they had cleared of occupationist troops two-thirds of the territory of Serbia, more than half of Montenegro, a large section of Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina."

The '41-'42 winter successes of the Red Army were inspiring to the Partisan leadership which, according to *Ogonek*, "widely utilized [those months] for reorganizing and replenishing the ranks of the people's armed forces. Detachments were transformed into shock battalions and brigades. The High Command of the Partisan and Volunteer Armies was created; connections were established with the Partisan detachments operating in Albania and Greece."

By the summer of '42, continues the *Ogonek* chronicle, "the Partisans were operating with comparatively large military formations equipped with artillery. . . . By this time [they] also had planes" which they had either captured from the enemy or received from the Russians.

From El Libro Negro: Del Terror Nazi en Europa

Woodcut by Leopoldo Méndez

"Partisan detachments attacked the occupationist garrisons, annihilated them, destroyed bridges, blew up important industrial enterprises, and burned the grain requisitioned from the population whenever the occasion did not permit them to distribute it among the starving peasants."

News of some of these Partisan operations got out of Yugoslavia soon after they occurred but, thanks to the Yugoslav government in London and its agents in Switzerland and Turkey, and to British information channels, they were credited to Mikhailovich forces directly or by implication—not only in such papers as the New York and London *Times*, but for a long while also in the *Daily Worker*, which on September 8, '41 for instance reported that "approximately forty Serbian guerrillas attacked an estate in western Croatia near Lokvé, in Lika, killing the landlord and the German soldiers there." The same dispatch stated that "coal mines in Leslyanah were systematically attacked by big detachments numbering up to four hundred guerrillas who possessed field guns. The Croatian authorities [Gestapo, Anté Pavelich & Co.] were compelled to send out regular troops."

This was resistance against occupation, but also something else—revolutionary activity clearly aimed at the traitors to the people, at those who collaborated with the enemy and its quislings, including the Chetniks, and less clearly, but just as surely, at the economic system of prewar and wartime Yugoslavia which allowed huge individual holdings in the face of mass poverty and permitted the vast raw resources of the country, particularly mines and forests, to be exploited by foreign capital and its native servants and by the hierarchy of the Church.

In Upper Slovenia the guerrillas maintained persistent, intense activity during '42-'43 in the Bohin-Triglav region which contains the holdings of the Slovenian Catholic hierarchy that were returned to it in the "deal" mentioned in the last chapter. The wave of popular indignation produced by the Paul-Stoyadinovich-Koroshets transaction increased when the hierarchy began to interfere with the timber and grazing rights the peasants had enjoyed under State ownership. Now the guerrillas occupying the forests decided to see them re-nationalized after the military enemy was driven out of the country.

There was a lot of red and hot revolutionary blood in the Partisan movement before it acquired the general label of Liberation Front. The movement was revolutionary not only because it included or was led by Communists. For centuries large sections of South-Slavic

The shaded portions on the map indicate the main areas in Yugoslavia where the Partisan armies were engaging the German-Italian occupation forces and their agents, as reported by radio "Free Yugoslavia" during 1942.

nations had had a continually frustrated revolutionary impulse, which now found a new promise of self-expression.

Although not wholly unaware of the ideological ups and downs of the Soviet between 1917 and '41, this revolutionary impulse of large sections of the South-Slavic peoples was in line with the general Russian idea. It was definitely to upset the old economic forms and relations, particularly foreign exploitation of the country's resources, and to have a new deal.

Writing in the February 2, '43 *Daily Worker*, Velimir Vlakhovich, the Partisans' accredited representative in Moscow, said that in the Serbian town of Uzhitsé "the guerrillas confiscated more than ten million dinars. In large towns such as Chachak and Kralyevo similar amounts were taken over. Large sums were also obtained by attacking Axis military and passenger trains." The money was used for military and other operational purposes. While the Partisans held Uzhitsé, for example, they established or reopened factories in which, according to an Inter-Continent News report published in the March 2, '43 *Slobodna Rech* (Free Expression), a pro-Partisan Serbian-language paper in Pittsburgh, "we ourselves produced different kinds of goods."

Like the prompt burning in '41 of sawmills in northern Slovenia, most of them owned by Clerical interests, which the Nazis had taken over to cut Slovenian lumber for the manufacture of skis to be used by the *Wehrmacht* on the Russian front, or like the flooding of the big Terbovlyé coal mines in Southern Slovenia, all these Partisan acts in central Yugoslavia had immediate military purposes. But the Partisans' revolutionary leaders also had political aims. Late in '41 and all through '42 occasional Moscow dispatches in the *Daily Worker* based on Free Yugoslavia broadcasts included such information as this: "Food from army stores captured by guerrillas was distributed to the needy population. . . . Flour was distributed among starving peasants. . . . Peasants in the localities controlled by the guerrillas have received lumber for building without charge." This was not unlike what the American army did in liberated places as a routine matter with food stores brought from the United States.

It obviously was good humanitarianism—an antidote to the Axis. It was also effective war-time economics and politics. It fed the people. And it yanked to the side of the Partisans those of the poor peasants, industrial workers and average folk who otherwise might have remained indifferent to the fierce and strange struggle develop-

ing in the country, or who might have shrunk from it. It spread and solidified Partisan support.

The spreading mass support, in turn, impressed many local politicos with various liberal, progressive, democratic and Leftist labels who had never had any kind of drastic revolutionary notion before the Nazi-Fascist occupation but now were impelled to join the Partisans. It stirred up also some former would-be leaders in different localities who previously had seemed unable to strike the right chord in order to evoke an echo in the people but who now suddenly decided to follow their instinct. And it touched off some outstanding intellectuals, with the result that not a few found themselves men of the hour: Josip Vidmar for one.

Another writer of high prestige who joined the new movement was the venerable Vladimir Nazor, dean of Croatian literature. He became the head of the Croatian Liberation Front.

With the local men and women who joined up were also lawyers, teachers, doctors, Orthodox priests; and men like the Partisan "Marko" who wrote the letter to his unborn son.

Not all of them however could become guerrilla fighters. Besides, some obviously were more valuable as political and intellectual leaders. And so the Liberation Front came into existence as a political apparatus.

LF was a number of things, but before anything else it was a confluence of the hot blood in the country. The phrase "Liberation Front" instantly elicited a powerful emotional response. Then it evolved into a fighting idea and program in tune with South-Slavic traditions and natural instincts.

It turned out to be a crudely constructed political raft which, tossing on the turbulent and bloody flood-waters of revolutionary resistance, had room for Communists and non-Communists alike.

The top Partisan-LF leadership included from the first both Communists and non-Communists, combinations like Boris Kidrich and Josip Vidmar which managed to work remarkably well, either because such men were naturally intelligent or because intelligent cooperation was forced upon them by circumstances. *Death to Fascism! Liberty to the People!* was politically a perfect slogan. It was a complete program. It rang through the villages and through the forests where hundreds of thousands of people were hiding. It helped to touch off the deepest feelings. It was uttered by leaders who unquestionably were of the people and who did not stop with slogans. They

conducted forays against the Fascists. They actually dealt death to them and liberated villages, towns and regions. They distributed food to civilians who needed it badly, who had never had enough of anything—sometimes even though the fighting guerrillas themselves had little idea where their next meal was coming from.

There were cruelties and excesses of course: some of the Partisans were not altogether high-souled and well disciplined every day of the week. But even enemy journalists, hard as they tried, seemed unable to write of them with convincing contempt. *Corriere della Sera* (December 20, '42), for instance, published an article by Virgilio Lilli who apparently had had an opportunity to see "bands" of them at close range: ". . . . They go contrary to all the rules governing normal militia. They wear old uniforms. In the main these uniforms come from the old Yugoslav army, but often they were taken off dead enemies. On their caps they wear the Soviet Star with Hammer and Sickle, and above it an emblem of crossed swords. On their shirts or tunics they also wear disks engraved with mottoes like *Death*! *Blood*! *Freedom*! . . . All of them have the appearance of being mobile arsenals. On their backs and stomachs they find room for the most extraordinary and deadly weapons which . . . soldiers have ever carried. At their sides swing two, three, even four knives, sometimes even ordinary axes. From their hips hang revolvers of all calibers and makes. On their shoulders they have two, three rifles or an automatic gun. . . . The Partisans are a real mixture of races and nationalities. . . . There are also many women among them." And in general this improvised army, a people's army, behaved extremely well, especially from the spring of '42 on.

At various times during '42 the LF-Partisan movement controlled from one-third to one-half of Yugoslavia. But the freed area was never in one piece. Regions dominated by the Partisans were islands surrounded by enemy-occupied territory. The size of these islands changed from day to day with the ups and downs of warfare. Apart from those in rural "Italian" Slovenia, they were mostly in the central and southwest sections of Yugoslavia. And they seemed to endure the longest where the mixture of Croatians and Serbians, Orthodox and Catholics was greatest—suggesting that the LF had profound success in diminishing or by-passing the differences which all other forces in the country, including Mikhailovich, were doing their best to stimulate.

The Partisan High Command started training camps for officers. In the April '43 issue of the *Bolshevik*, the chief theoretical organ of

the Bolshevik party, a writer named Davidov mentioned—in the course of a general discussion of the Yugoslav Partisan movement—that "over six hundred officers of high and middle rank were graduated from the Military Academy at Vish."

Partisan generalship was often superb. At times it played the very devil with the Axis and the Chetniks. It may be that some day Tito will be recognized as one of the great leaders of World War II. In June '42, after the fall of Tobruk, while Mikhailovich was conducting his big offensive against the Partisans, Tito sent special sabotage squads to Macedonia where they wrecked railroad tracks and highway bridges, blew up trains and trucks rushing supplies to Salonika, to be shipped to Rommel in Africa who was heading for Egypt and points east. The Yugoslav government propaganda not only credited this operation to Mikhailovich, but blew it up into the suggestion that he thereby saved Egypt and the Middle East. Actually if the sabotage in Macedonia helped to save Egypt and the Middle East, it was the work of people whom Mikhailovich was then trying to "exterminate" because they were "criminals" and "Communists." Tito was anti-British-imperialism; but the paramount thing then was for all Allies to do everything possible to prevent Rommel from getting to Suez, to prevent Germany and Japan from closing the pincer over India and around Russia. . . .

Partizanstvo knew where it was going, what it wanted. And it had learned to maintain itself. It lived off the enemy and the territory where it operated. Partisan units, filled with complete indifference to death (one of the highest possible degrees of freedom and the source of unimaginable strength) abruptly appeared as if from nowhere and wiped out enemy detachments twice their number. With the utmost ingenuity these minutemen penetrated enemy lines, blew up heavily-guarded arsenals, stopped supply convoys and made off with food and equipment.

There are stories of cooperation between the always-fluid front and the rear. The following one is another example in detail of how the Partisans got hold of supplies: Railroad men at Maribor, in northeastern Slovenia, knew that a train was coming through full of munitions for the *Einsatzstaffel,* a German auxiliary outfit attached to the Élite Guard units of the Gestapo command in Zagreb. They sent word to the guerrillas operating in the mountainous region south of the city. The train would leave on such and such a day, at such and such an hour, on the Maribor-Celyé-Zagreb line, and an "accident" could immobilize the locomotive at any point the Partisans

chose for an attack. A plan was worked out. Engine trouble developed at point X and the train stopped. The commander of the Nazi escort got suspicious and ran over to the locomotive, whose boiler exploded just in time to kill him. The Nazi soldiers who followed him in double-quick time were dropped to the last man by shots from the woods along the tracks where guerrilla snipers were concealed. The Partisans and peasants then unloaded the arms and carted them off, setting the wooden freight-cars on fire. The railroad men who had started the incident went with them into the mountains.

While the Partisans fought, Mikhailovich's main job, apart from attacking them sporadically, was to wireless to the Yugoslav government in London the names of hundreds of Yugoslav army officers who had left him and gone over to the LF army, recommending they be deprived of their commissions. The inner clique carried out all such recommendations, as it did those for decorating Chetniks who "distinguished" themselves in fratricidal operations.

Severely wounded Chetnik officers were hospitalized in Nedich's Nazi-occupied Belgrade. One such officer, Major Kalabich, later awarded a medal by the regime-in-exile in London, was even visited in a Belgrade hospital by quisling Nedich himself.

Such and similar instances prompted the Partisans' Colonel Orovich in the spring of '43 to denounce King Peter's government for decorating traitors.

The Future Tries to Get Hold of Itself

In freed areas, the Liberation Front leadership sponsored numerous assemblies which had great propaganda value.

One of these, reported *via* Free Yugoslavia radio and the Inter-Continent News was the Congress of Doctors and Medical Workers of the Yugoslav Guerrilla and Volunteer Army held "somewhere on liberated soil between September 25 and 27, '42" under the chairmanship of Dr. Simo Miloshevich, a Serbian and a one-time professor at Belgrade University. Fifty doctors and scores of nurses and ambulance drivers came "despite great hardships" of travel. They "discussed four main points: army surgery, ambulance service of the guerrilla army, first-aid to the wounded and sick, and health protection of the population in liberated regions." Surgeons read papers on how wounds had been treated and operations performed without adequate medicines and instruments.

The papers were sent by courier to the International Red Cross in Geneva. With them went a protest against "the unheard-of atrocities to which Partisan doctors, nurses and wounded guerrillas have been subjected by the Nazi and Fascist invaders, the Ustashi and Mikhailovich's Chetniks."

Two weeks later Serbian Orthodox priests and seminary students serving in the various Partisan brigades—men who fought as well as prayed—held a conference in Srpské Yasenitsé, in Bosanska Krayina, and sent a message to "the people in the occupied and liberated territories" and, over Free Yugoslavia, to the outside world:

". . . . Through many centuries there have not been witnessed such crimes as the [recent] slaughter of Serbians . . . by the advocates

of the 'New Order' in Europe, such crimes as those committed by the Fascists in the sixteen months of their occupation of Yugoslavia. There is no possible justification for the collaboration with occupationists of any Orthodox bishop or priest or any other Serbian.

"Collaboration with the Axis, now practiced by some bishops and priests, is a crime; it is treachery to the people; and we disown them for it. . . . We likewise dissociate ourselves from the White Guard emigré, the self-styled Metropolitan Hermogenus, Pavelich's 'head of the Croatian Orthodox Church,' who sows confusion and belittles the Orthodox faith. Such is the point of view of our Congress—the only point of view that conforms with our Church's traditions.

". . . We express deep esteem for those priests who died, arms in hand, fighting against the occupationists and their lackeys, the traitors to the people, the Ustashi and Chetniks. We similarly express appreciation for those martyrs of the Church, the metropolitans, bishops and priests who have been tortured to death by the Germans, Italians, Ustashi and Chetniks.

"The priests serving with the guerrilla units, accompanying the victorious brigades in liberated parts of Yugoslavia, have regenerated the religious life of the Serbian people. Wrecked and desecrated churches have been restored, cleansed and sanctified. Tens of thousands of children have been baptized. Tens of thousands who were killed in battle or tortured to death have been accorded Christian burial. Hundreds of new homes have been blessed. Many thousands have received Holy Communion. . . .

"Never before have Serbian priests been closer to the people and the people to them than they are today in Liberated Territory. The people and the clergy pledge themselves to do all in their power to prevent religious differences from being the apple of discord among South-Slavic nations. . . . [We] appeal to the Catholic and Moslem clergy to join their peoples who are swelling the ranks of the guerrillas. . . . In this Sacred Liberation War our peoples have forged their brotherhood with the peoples of the Soviet Union and with all who are enslaved and freedom-loving.

"We reject and condemn the fratricidal war being conducted by the Chetniks of Drazha Mikhailovich jointly with the occupationists against the sons and daughters of the Yugoslav people . . . against the guerrillas.

". . . God and the people are with us. *Death to fascism! Liberty to the people!*"

In mid-autumn '42 thirty-odd representatives of Partisan women

held a two-day conference. Among them was the editor of an underground paper.

One question they discussed was that of thousands of war-made orphans, most of them under ten, who roamed the country or lived in wrecked houses without adult care.

A climax of the LF movement as the political concomitant of the Partisans' military operations came about on November 26-27, '42, when the Constituent Assembly of the Anti-Fascist *Veché* (Council or Soviet) of the Peoples' Liberation of Yugoslavia met in the recently regained town of Bikhach, in eastern Bosnia near the Croatian border. The news of this event was broadcast by Free Yugoslavia on December 2nd and 15th.*

The sessions were attended by fifty-three delegates, among them "prominent political and social leaders representing various parties." There were "former senators and deputies in the Belgrade parliament, clergymen, leaders of the women's anti-fascist front." They were mostly heads of the regional and communal governing councils that Tito had had in mind more than a year before when he wrote the letter to Drazha Mikhailovich from which I have quoted.

A few weeks earlier Bikhach and its vicinity had been the scene of fierce battles between the Partisans and the Nazis and Ustashi which resulted in a clear victory for the guerrillas and most likely in much ruin within the old town. Bikhach dates back to the thirteenth century, when it was part of Croatia; by the late '30s it had a population of about seven thousand, very mixed as to religion and ethnic background. But the condition of the place notwithstanding, "the meeting had a very festive character," according to the Free Yugoslavia version. "In spite of the severe cold, thousands . . . came [from the surrounding country as well as from a distance] to greet the people's representatives. . . ."

The delegates briefly called themselves the Veché—a favorite Serbo-Croatian word with rich associations in the long history of South-Slavic strivings toward democracy.

The chairmanship of the two-day assembly went to Dr. Ivan Ribar, a Croatian lawyer from the town of Dyakovo who, as an eminent member of the Democratic Party of Serbia, had always been a strong pro-Serbian. Politically he had collaborated for a time with

*Through most of the writing of this book Free Yugoslavia broadcasts could be heard in New York and vicinity on the wave length 25.40 at 14:00 o'clock Greenwich Time (10:00 a. m. Eastern War Time).

the late Svetozar Pribichevich, a democratic Serbian leader from Croatia, and later with Lyubomir Davidovich, a democratic Serbian leader in Serbia proper. In 1920 Dr. Ribar was elected chairman of the Constituent Assembly which produced the first Yugoslav constitution. His record—the full significance of which will appear later, against the political background of Yugoslavia—was doubtless a reason for his election as chairman in Bikhach, but I think it was due even more to his being the father of Lovro Ribar, shown in a previous chapter as a young man of rather definite ideas about the future, and most probably a Communist.

The Bikhach assembly was a result of the same convergence of political and cultural forces, the same rushing together of hot blood and red, that brought about the Vidmar-Kidrich coalition in Slovenia. Bikhach witnessed the same pattern of cooperation between Communists and various democratic, liberal, independent and unlabeled non-Communists. "In two days of fruitful work the Constituent Assembly adopted a general resolution, issued an appeal to the people, and elected an Executive Committee of ten with a chairman and three vice-chairmen of different nationalities. The Executive Committee will deal with all problems of public life in cooperation with the peoples' liberation committees formed in almost all regions in Liberated Territory and also in some non-liberated areas."

The Veché sent greetings to the High Command of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia: ". . . We deem it our duty before the Yugoslav peoples and the whole world to express our appreciation and gratitude to the High Command . . . which under the leadership of Commander-in-Chief Tito has for eighteen months been successfully waging the Liberation War. . . . [We] will do everything to help the High Command and our heroic army to strengthen the amity of all our forces, the unity of the front and the rear; to speed the final victory of our peoples over the hated enemies—the occupationists and their Chetnik and Ustashi flunkeys. *Death to fascism! Liberty to the people!*"

Four other messages were sent over Free Yugoslavia.

To Joseph Stalin: "[Our] first greetings . . . go to you, the great soldier and organizer of the victories of the freedom-loving peoples over fascism. By founding the Anti-Fascist Veché of People's Liberation of Yugoslavia, the peoples of our country have once more clearly demonstrated their unswerving will and determination to fight shoulder to shoulder with the peoples of the Soviet Union until complete victory is won over the common enemy. An unbreakable brotherhood

in arms has been formed in the present struggle between the peoples of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. No one can ever break our unity. *Death to fascism! Liberty to the people!"*

To "the heroic defenders of Stalingrad": "[We] . . . send to you, the splendid heroes of the invincible Red Army and the defenders of the great city of Stalin, [our] ardent fraternal greetings. The example of your struggle and your heroism has shown to the peoples in all anti-Axis countries the way to victory, has reduced to absurdity all the legends about the 'invincibility' of the German troops and has been and is inspiring the men, commanders and political instructors of our heroic People's Liberation Army and all the patriots of Yugoslavia to fresh military exploits, to new sacrifices and efforts for victory over . . . bloody fascism and its associates. *Long live the brave defenders of Stalingrad! Liberty to the people!"*

To Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, in almost identical words: ". . . We send greetings to your esteemed Excellency and to the people of the United States (Britain). You may rely on the peoples of our country to continue the struggle together with all freedom-loving peoples . . . until final victory over hated Hitlerism and its associates. *Death to fascism! Liberty to the people!"*

In its general declaration, a lengthy document, the Veché listed "the strong fighting unity of the Yugoslav peoples" under the LF leadership as the paramount result of the eighteen months' struggle against Hitler, Mussolini and his henchmen, Nedichevtsi, Mikhailovichevtsi and the Ustashi. It took in "all honest patriots of Yugoslavia regardless of nationality, religion or political convictions" and "men and women of differing social strata regardless of the form in which this unity expresses itself in various regions." But its "highest expression . . . is the People's Liberation Army [which] began the struggle with bare hands, [then] developed into regiments and brigades under the single leadership of the High Command headed by the brave Commander-in-Chief Tito, [so that now] it is capable of wide offensive operations. . . .

"[We] declare to the world that all our peoples recognize this army, help it, and see in it the sole force which is waging the sacred struggle for freedom and which is capable of bringing it to a victorious conclusion. . . . At the same time the lies about the war of resistance conducted against the invader by the traitor Drazha Mikhailovich are being scattered to the winds before the eyes of the world." The Veché suggested that if doubt continued in some Allied

countries as to who was fighting the enemy, the Chetniks or the Partisans, a commission of United Nations' military officers be sent into Yugoslavia to determine the matter for themselves.

The delegates referred to the Soviet government's note of September 14 addressed to all United Nations and neutral powers concerning the responsibility of the Hitlerite invaders and associates for the crimes perpetrated in occupied countries. They were specially impressed by the significance of these words: "beyond any doubt the successful development of the guerrilla struggle will become one of the most important factors in the final rout of the enemy and in bringing nearer the hour of reckoning.

"Together with all freedom-loving peoples, the Yugoslavs declare that they are keeping an account of all the crimes of . . . the German-Italian occupationists, and that not a single criminal must escape the justice of the people's court. . . . The war minister of the Yugoslav government, Drazha Mikhailovich, must be put in the dock together with the occupationists, together with Pavelich, Nedich, Lyotich and Pechanats for the crimes of the Ustashi and Chetniks against the Serbians and Croatians, Christians and Moslems of Yugoslavia."

Circumstances, geographical and others, prevented the Slovenian Liberation Front from sending delegates to Bikhach. The Veché complimented it for having "absorbed" many formerly divergent elements "despite the treachery or cowardice of numerous members of the former Slovenian ruling class."

The Veché declared its solidarity with "all honest and patriotic elements . . . of the Croatian Peasant Party in spite of the opportunist policy of 'patience' and 'biding time' advocated by its leader, Dr. Vladko Machek." It mentioned "the starved and poorly trained Croatian regular soldiers"—also under the command of Pavelich and Kvaternik; not to be confused with the Ustashi militia—who "surrender *en masse* to our Partisan army, which allows them to go home, regarding them as brothers who by force and deceit have been drawn by the enemy into the fight against us."

The Veché reviewed the situation in other regions and found it good on the whole, although full of hardships. But the general movement was away from the past toward "full freedom and equality in the fraternal family of liberated [Yugoslav] peoples which no one will succeed in destroying, for it has been forged in the fire of common struggle."

The Executive Committee created by the Veché and headed by Ivan Ribar was defined as "a political, representative body working

with the chief in command of the liberation struggle and of our people's army"—in short, the nucleus of the *new government of Yugoslavia*. Its principal tasks in addition to directing the liberation struggle were: "the developing of the already existing unity of the front and the rear; the organization of supplies for the armies; the strengthening of the work of the people's liberation committees, the safeguarding of personal liberty and property; the raising of the people's cultural level, and the organization of social welfare and public-health services."

Thus the future was trying to get hold of itself in the face of an impossible present. It was trying to assume form in order to prevent the resuscitation of an equally impossible past—whose only good feature was that it had prepared many people for this moment.

But the general press and the radio in America and England almost wholly ignored all these LF meetings and messages and declarations. Although a great deal of information was available through the ICN and was appearing promptly in Communist and other strongly anti-fascist journals throughout the fall of '42, the large papers continued to refer to the Partisans and the LF in Yugoslavia only in the government-in-exile's denials that Drazha Mikhailovich was pro-Axis and a traitor—and in the communiqués of the Red Army's High Command which occasionally summarized Partisan activities in occupied countries.

So far as I know, no American radio commentator breathed a word about the Partisans till after the middle of December '42. And short-wave broadcasters when they mentioned resistance in Yugoslavia were officially permitted to talk of Mikhailovich and the Chetniks but not about the Partisans.

Yet in those very weeks in the late autumn of '42 it was not Mikhailovich but the Partisans—the "irresponsible Reds" as they were called in one dispatch—who conducted operations against the Axis occupationists wherever they could get at them in the Balkans with the express purpose of helping the Anglo-American campaign in North Africa—although I do not doubt that people like Tito and Ivan Ribar, Boris Kidrich and Josip Vidmar must have been infinitely perturbed by our Darlaniad.

Our official American attitude to these stirrings in Yugoslavia was at least distantly—but disturbingly—analogous to that of the England of George III to the revolutionary beginnings in America. Our policy was no-policy. Official Washington had no one in Yugoslavia to keep it informed. It followed the British policy, the views

and purposes of the pre-'43 British agents. It was legitimist. It wanted no revolution in Yugoslavia, in the Balkans, in Eastern Europe, in all of Europe. It entertained King Peter and Momchilo Ninchich, who told it that the internal situation in Yugoslavia was nothing to worry about—at that time Ninchich actually believed that Mikhailovich had exterminated the Partisans. Protocol, if nothing else, kept Washington from acknowledging the message of greeting from the Veché, whose forces were aiding American operations in Africa. Mikhailovich was Washington's man, its possible Darlan in the Balkans.

But this was nothing new in the experience of the South-Slavic peoples. This sort of thing had been going on for centuries. The Great Powers had always worked with the Ninchiches and Fotiches, Mikhailoviches and Nediches in the Balkans. Official America having been sucked into the world mess, was simply following the pattern.

The Axis Attacks Through the Rift

PARTISAN OPERATIONS IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHEASTERN Yugoslavia during November-December '42 were so considerable that they heightened Axis anxiety about North Africa and the Anglo-American invasion of the Balkans which threatened to follow. By mid-December the Nazis decided to open a full-scale offensive against the LF guerrillas. In order to clean them out, Hitler used extra troops and matériel which might otherwise have gone to his hard-pressed commanders in Russia and Africa.

Either directly from Axis sources or through his own intelligence service, General Drazha Mikhailovich learned of these plans late in December or very early in January. During the next few weeks the new British agents in Yugoslavia, paving the way for Britain's change in foreign policy in relation to Russia and the postwar period, were trying to narrow the rift between Mikhailovich and the Partisans. But, as we know, they failed.

Before the Nazis opened their offensive against the Partisans, Drazha Mikhailovich himself attacked a few Partisan positions from the tiny block of territory he controlled, mainly on Axis sufferance, in southeastern Yugoslavia. Why did he do that just then? He had not fought the Partisans for at least two and a half months. Did he resume the fight to put an emphatic end to the British idea of establishing rapport between him and the Liberation Front forces? Or to reassure the Germans of his anti-Partisanism in order to prevent any misunderstanding which might lead them to attack him too?

Whatever his reasons were, it is a fact that early in January Mikhailovich had dispatched to his government in London a foreshadowing report which included this statement: "Parts of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and a part of Lika near the town of Bikhach are now in the hands of the Communists," lumping

all the LF people under that title, according to his custom. "But the fate of the Communists will soon be settled here as well."

About January 20th the Axis launched its offensive against the LF guerrillas and within a few days violent fighting broke out on more than a score of fronts from Lika to Sandjak, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, along the peripheries of Pavelich's Croatia, in Montenegro and the Dalmatian Highlands, along the river Drina, in the border areas between Bosnia and Nedich's Serbia. German generals in charge of the Axis operations used about ten thousand each of Italian and Ustashi troops. But the big punch for the campaign came from the special anti-guerrilla shock troops which had recently been organized under Gestapo Chief Himmler's personal supervision. Each of these units was provided with native "White Guard" guides. Whether these traitors were borrowed from the Mikhailovichevtsi or Ustashi or from Nedich, or whether they were free-lance fifth-columnists recruited by the Gestapo, is anybody's guess.

Reports have it that between one-fifth and one-fourth of the more than a hundred thousand Partisans directly involved in these battles were women.

Guerrilla equipment was inferior to Axis arms, tanks and planes; so were their communications and supply systems; and the blows dealt them in the early battles were shattering at many points. Several Partisan regiments and brigades were entirely wiped out. On the Montenegro-Herzegovina fronts alone, according to three different reports, upward of five thousand Partisans were killed. A good part of the Liberated Territory was lost, including the town of Bikhach which the November 26-27 assembly had made a kind of symbol of LF-Partisan power and aspirations.

A disaster of this scope might have been fatal to a regular army. But not to the Partisans. Before the offensive began—according to an analysis by I. Vlasov, a Russian writer specializing in guerrilla warfare, dispatched from Moscow on May 12th by Inter-Continent News—Tito and his staff had "issued an order to the guerrilla detachments scattered practically throughout the unliberated territory to start operations against the weakened occupation garrisons and to wipe them out wherever possible. This step was aimed at preventing the enemy from receiving reinforcements."

In addition, the Partisan High Command sent through Liberated Territory as well as through adjacent regions hundreds of small, specially organized guerrilla groups with orders to cause the Axis as

much damage as they could in any way they could, regardless of consequences to themselves. Commando-like, they operated mostly at night, and at first they bewildered, then alarmed the Axis. "Savage" is the word that best describes them. Knowing the country better after dark than the occupationists and most of their White Guard guides knew it in the daytime, and skilled in the use of the knife, garrotte and bayonet, the rifle butt, the tommy-gun and the grenade, they hurled themselves on enemy garrisons and pill-boxes, killing thousands of Germans, Italians, Ustashi and Chetniks and destroying their stores and installations.

The tentacles of fear must have tightened around the Axis when Churchill conferred with Turkish leaders at Adana. To the Nazi High Command that conference meant that the Turks might soon come into the war against them, and the South-Slavic guerrillas were all the more an obstacle in their calculations. They *had* to be cleaned out. So, although confronted by a tough situation in Russia, Hitler diverted five fresh divisions to Yugoslavia, including *Luftwaffe* and crack panzer units.

Stukas pulverized villages still in the hands of the Liberation Army, which simultaneously was set upon by Italian-German-Ustashi ground forces. Perhaps another ten thousand guerrillas were killed, along with thousands of non-combatants. "The regiments of the 718th and 35th German divisions were approaching the Partisan supply bases and hospitals," to quote further from the Vlasov analysis. "The men [and women] of the People's Liberation Army were on iron rations. Due to the shortage of salt they had been eating unsalted food for several weeks. They were falling sick from sheer exhaustion [plus the cold].

"The situation demanded incredible staunchness . . . superhuman efforts. These qualities were there. . . . Suffice it to say that the units of the Fourth Montenegrin Brigade defending a hospital repulsed eleven enemy attacks in one day alone."

The LF's remaining military power now split into two main sections. One clambered up the steep wind-swept ridges of the Dinaric Alps. The other rolled down into the historic, blood-soaked country where Serbia proper meets so-called Old Serbia. This Partisan force is said to have established contact with the ardently pro-Russian Bulgarian guerrillas in the Macedonian mountain ranges.

Both sections preserved their organization (loose and easily adjustable from the beginning) and carried along such supplies as could be picked up in a hurry; also their wounded and in some cases even

their dead. When the guerrillas of the mountain-bound army could no longer drive their cattle over the narrow ledges of that steep and craggy terrain, they slaughtered them, then lugged along the beef which froze in the February high-elevation temperature.

In addition to the two main groups, sizable Partisan outfits remained in the well-nigh inaccessible mountains in central Yugoslavia. They reorganized from day to day according to circumstances, and concentrated on holding the ledges commanding the deep gorges which are the only passageways from one valley to another. In some of these units were merged the small groups whose nocturnal operations had played such havoc with the Germans, Italians and Ustashi earlier in the campaign. And there were many roving bands which continued to fight long into March with so much ferocity and heroism that battles with them were acknowledged in German communiqués and Axis newspapers.

Vlasov says that west of Sarajevo "as a result of thirty-five days of violent battles [one overlapping the other in point of time and often in territory] the losses of the 718th and 35th German divisions and the Italian 'Murge' Division were so great that on March 23rd the Germans ceased operations; also the Fascist units attacking the Bosnian Corps . . . were compelled to do the same. In [this latter fighting] the invaders lost more than eight thousand officers and men in killed and wounded."

At the All-Slav Congress in Moscow on May 9th the Partisan spokesman said that in the two months of fighting the Axis forces "lost in killed, wounded and captured over twenty thousand soldiers and officers. The enemy was forced to discontinue the offensive and pass to the defensive."

Although Partisan losses were still greater, perhaps exceeding thirty thousand men and women, the Axis failed in its purpose which, as Mikhailovich suggested in his early-January message to London, had been to encircle and destroy all of the LF forces in central and southeastern Yugoslavia. By the end of March the Germans were obliged to give up that idea; on the 30th their communiqués announced the completion of their campaign "to clear Croatia of guerrillas."

In a very vital sense, the Partisans defeated the offensive. Their stand helped the Anglo-American effort in North Africa. It was invaluable to the Russian winter offensive in the Caucasus and the Ukraine.

It was not Mikhailovich's fault, however, that the Partisans were

not annihilated. It was just before the five additional Axis divisions reached the battle areas that the new chief of the British liaison officers in Yugoslavia first requested, then practically ordered Mikhailovich to mobilize his adherents and to attack the Germans and the Ustashi. If Mikhailovich had heeded him, there might have been a clear-cut anti-Axis victory. But——

I suggested a moment ago that perhaps it was mainly Axis sufferance which permitted Mikhailovich to remain a force in Yugoslavia early in '43. The fascist "technique of depopulation" had need of him. The deep-running intra-Yugoslav antagonism had to be kept going. His removal would mean the blunting of one of its main instruments: civil war. And, given the character of the Partisan movement, the way to perpetuate civil war was by tacitly supporting Mikhailovich. The Partisans had their base in the people and were tied up with the Russians. Mikhailovich was anti-Red. They fought the Axis *now*. Mikhailovich did not. They had not the patience to wait for the Anglo-American invasion. Mikhailovich had. They would not make deals. Mikhailovich would. Mikhailovich did. . . .

In fact, part of the force under Chetnik-leader Yevdjevich which in February held the Dinaric mountain region between Herzegovina and Montenegro actively helped the Axis against the Partisans. Before me is a copy of an order covering their operations which the Partisans found on the person of a Chetnik officer, and which was broadcast on March 4th over Free Yugoslavia. The order reads in part:

Number 18

General Headquarters, February 25, 1943

Operative Order of the Commander of the Montenegrin-Herzegovinian Detachment (use map Konitsa-Prozor-Nevesine-Mostar area):

Under heavy pressure from our Chetnik units, the Communist troops abandoned western Bosnia, their ranks partially disordered, and are fleeing in different directions. Groups of them have broken through the River Drezhnitsa Valley, and are concentrated at Imotsk. Another group got to Konitsa, where it was halted by the Lipsk-Sandjak Chetnik Detachment. . . . . Chetnik reconnaissance parties have come upon them also on the left bank of the Neretva up to Biely Potok . . . and along the eastern slope of Mount Tabura.

Our Chetnik detachments are being quickly reinforced all along the way and will launch attacks . . . with the aim of routing the Communists.

[Follow special instructions numbered 1 to 17 for different units,

regions and contingencies. Some are merely marching directions; others have general interest:]

6. In the event of the appearance of airplanes which will seek to locate Chetnik positions, our men are ordered to signal to them with flags, rags, tent canvases and blankets.

7. Enroute to positions, commanders are to use guides from among the population whose names have been given them.

9. Battalion and detachment commanders are to set up field dressing stations. . . . The seriously wounded are to be sent to the hospital at Mostar. The slightly wounded should make their way to Gorantsy.

10. Before we capture Drezhnitsa, food and munitions will be supplied from Gorantsy. For transportation all draft animals are to be requisitioned along the line of operations, and their owners used as drivers. Where there are no animals, local inhabitants are to be organized as pack carriers and convoyed by Chetniks.

15. . . . Major Blazh Goynits is my second-in-command. . . .

16. Before marching, battalion and detachment commanders are to leave a quartermaster with my adjutant, Major Payovich, to receive supplies; and each must have exact data on the number of Chetniks, etc. . . . Warn the Chetniks that they must fill their canteens before starting out, and to use the water sparingly as it is scarce along most of the route.

17. Beginning tomorrow the 26th, my headquarters will be in Mostar. I shall inform you of its later location.

By order of the Commander: Captain, First Class, Vlad Dzinich, Chief of Staff.

"Yet," cried a voice over the Free Yugoslavia radio station early in March '43, "in spite of all this there are people calling themselves fighters against Hitlerite tyranny and reckoning themselves friends of the Yugoslav people who, with members of the Yugoslav government in London, and certain British and American men of affairs and their newspapers, continue to regard Mikhailovich as the war minister of Yugoslavia, supposedly organizing the struggle against the occupation forces."

The Mikhailovich Legend Goes On

EARLY IN APRIL '43 THROUGH THE YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT IN London, the United Press sent Mikhailovich—or thought it did—a request for a statement. The request was probably stimulated by rumors of the break with the British which had begun to circulate in diplomatic and journalistic circles.

On April 24th the United Press released a story datelined London quoting a statement by General Drazha Mikhailovich in response to the request. He would "continue to fight until Yugoslavia has been freed of every German and Italian. . . . Our allies must understand our military situation. . . . We will strike when the Allies invade the Balkans."

Mikhailovich did not make this statement. It was a fake—of course not on the part of the United Press whose integrity is not questioned, but on the part of the Yugoslav government-in-exile. It was written by an official deputed by the pan-Serbian inner clique to foster the Mikhailovich legend as long as possible. Characteristically stupid, its wording provoked much unfavorable comment in the United States—for example, this editorial entitled "Light on Yugoslavia" in the April 26th *Chicago Sun* which included further quotation from it:

"General Mikhailovich's recent message to the United Press . . . is a disturbing document. The Serbian general says it would be suicidal for his 'Chetniks' to launch a major offensive before receiving supplies from the Allies. He plans to wait until an Allied invasion occurs because 'we have got to be in position to attack simultaneously our enemies within and from without.'

"By 'our enemies within' Mikhailovich can only mean the Yugoslav Partisans . . . now fighting actively against the forces of Hitler and Mussolini. . . . In other words, the Mikhailovich idea of combating the Axis is to hold back and get American and British war equipment with which to seize control of the country.

"For more than a year reports of fighting activity by Mikhailovich against the Axis have been singularly lacking, while a steady stream of reports has come of operations by the Germans, Italians and Mikhailovich himself against the Partisans. . . .

"The Partisans are dismissed as Communists. Who cares what they are? They are fighting the Nazis where nobody else is doing so. They come chiefly from peasant regions, where nine-tenths of the people belong to the Serbian Agrarian and Independent Democratic parties. They hate the Serbian royal family, which Mikhailovich serves, and they want a democracy. It is time to get some light on Yugoslav affairs, or the first thing we know, the United States will be making the same kind of diplomatic blunders it did in North Africa, under far more dangerous circumstances."

On May 29th the news services sent another dispatch from London, reporting a "message" Mikhailovich had addressed to General Dwight D. Eisenhower, General Sir Bernard L. Montgomery and other Allied commanders in North Africa:

"The Yugoslav army, which has been fighting the enemy for two years and which is prepared for the decisive hour as are the whole Yugoslav people, learned with the greatest enthusiasm of the lightning and tremendous victory in Tunisia. The Yugoslav people today are one of the greatest victims of Nazi and Fascist terror, which has been reigning in Yugoslavia for two ghastly years.

"It is for this reason our people are looking forward to the coming destruction of the Axis, which has been carrying out a systematic annihilation of our nation. The Tunisian victory indeed is a mighty step forward toward freedom and democracy for which the Yugoslav army, free in the mountains of Yugoslavia, is fighting shoulder to shoulder with our great Allies.

"This wonderful victory is giving us ever more strength to endure to the bitter end this unequal, hard struggle and contributes even more toward our common victory over the forces of evil and darkness. On behalf of the Yugoslav army as well as in my own name I congratulate you on this victory. Long live our great Allies."

This too was a fake, written by the same official in London.

A Portuguese proverb says: "God writes straight with crooked lines." Some of His creatures on earth write straight lines with crooked purposes.

"Since Britain has turned against Mikhailovich," I said to a Yugoslav government official in New York who knows all about the fake dispatches, "why do you suppose she allows these fabrications to go through her censorship?"

"Because she recognizes the Yugoslav government in London," he said. "She couldn't come out and call it a liar. It would cause complications. And perhaps the British think that it's not very important just yet what the Yugoslav government does or does not do. Also the British may still have some use for Mikhailovich."

Background

The "Old Slavs" and Their Descendants

FOR YEARS AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR A STORY WENT AROUND in Yugoslavia about a conversation between old King Peter I of Serbia and a peasant. It took place on a battlefield in December 1914, when after a number of terrible battles the invading Austrian armies had been driven out of Serbia.

About as old as the king, and as gaunt and as bent, the peasant was trudging over the field still strewn with fallen soldiers. Like the king's, his face was tragedy itself. The king was returning from the front line to his field headquarters, and he stopped the man.

"Can I help you?" he asked.

"I am afraid you can't, *Chika* Pera (Uncle Peter)," said the peasant.

"Tell me," urged the king, "what is on your mind, what is in your heart. You seem to be looking for someone."

"I am looking for the body of my sixth and last son. They say he fell in the battle two days ago."

"Your sixth and last son?" said the king.

The peasant nodded. "Four of my boys died in the Balkan wars in 1912 and '13. The fifth was killed early in this new war. Now the sixth and last—"

Deeply moved, King Peter tried to soothe the peasant's grief and also to convey his own sense of Serbia's plight. But to the peasant it appeared as though the king was attempting to explain why he had had to ask him to send all his sons to war, and he said:

"That is the fate of our nation. I am not blaming anyone for the misfortune that has come to me. Surely I am not finding fault with you, *Chika* Pera, who have been the best king we've ever had. Besides, my lot is no worse than other Serbian parents'. If anyone is to blame for

our calamities, it is the first of our ancestors who came here hundreds of years ago. . . . Why did they pick out the Balkans? The whole world wants this region or wants to go through here on the way to some other place. *That* was the great mistake. Our ancestors should never have left Russia."

Just when the first forebears of present-day South-Slavs came to the Balkans (the name means "mountains") is of course unknown. Most likely it was sometime during the fourth century, according to hints in the blurry records of that period. But they were not numerous until late in the sixth, when Byzantine chroniclers began to refer to them as a "new terror," which in the early decades of the seventh century assumed the proportions of an "invasion."

A thousand years after that scholars started to label these migrants "Old Slavs."

The name "Slav" they probably brought from their former territory which was encompassed, roughly, by the rivers Dniester, Oder, Bug, Pripet and Dnieper in southwestern Russia, not yet called Russia. Within the region, says Edward Gibbon in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, were some forty-six hundred villages. But there was also at least one considerable town called Slovy; and one theory is that "*Sloveni*—Slavs" derived from it. Another form of the name used in various Slavic tongues is "*Slaveni*," which comes from "*slava*," meaning "glory." I believe this was a later revision of *Sloveni*; the Old Slavs did not care for glory, they simply wanted to live.

This much is certain: before they migrated from their marshy homeland they were one people, not split into separate nationalities called Slovenians, Croatians or Serbians or anything else.

Eighteenth-century scholars who first became interested in the Old Slavs were non-Slavs, mostly Germans and either consciously or unconsciously anti-Slavic; and their findings and views had full sway over the world's opinion until the early twentieth century. According to them, the Old Slavs were all but naked savages. Living in those Russian morasses, they knew nothing of stonework or metals. Historians, including Gibbon, compared them to the beaver, with apologies to that unique quadruped, because they lived in crude huts built of rough-hewn timber on the banks of rivers and the edges of swamps. That they seldom starved was ascribed to the fertility of the soil they inhabited. They had no state organization, no regular army, no kings, no outstanding leaders to look after their larger interests. They lived in small tribal or village communes and were under endless

attack by predatory neighbors and foraying Tartar and Mongol bands. Their food and other valuables were buried in the ground, but they would always dig up something to eat when a friendly stranger came along. This had to be said for them: they were hospitable. Also chaste and patient. Also good fighters when they got going, but usually they fought only when they had to. They were not warlike—a paramount disqualification in the eyes of some of these historians. When they fought, it was on foot with the most primitive bows and arrows and wooden shields. To their captives they were sometimes extremely cruel. They were hardy and agile, mighty swimmers and divers, able to stay under water for hours, breathing through hollow canes. They were even then guerrillas trained to fall upon the enemy from ambush, but they were incapable of siege operations and extended, intricate campaigns. . . . The chief god in the Old-Slavic religion was Dobrun the Thunderer, also called Perun, to whom they made their vows and sacrifices. They did not understand authority and discipline, large organizations of any sort. They were disorderly, lawless. . . .

Thus the non-Slavic savants.

Late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth centuries a few Slavic historians emerged who showed that the Old Slavs on coming to the Balkans were rather like most of the other peoples then swarming over the continent of Europe and the British Isles. Consciously or unconsciously anti-German, some of these scholars suggested that the Old Slavs were perhaps somewhat better than the aggressive, predatory ancestors of the Germans. They wanted to be left alone to work and to reproduce their kind. They inclined strongly to democracy long before they knew that the Greeks had a word for it, or before they even heard of the Greeks. They had their shortcomings and their virtues, and it was not always easy to say which was which. Their passion for liberty and independence, for instance, was so great, so direct and heedless, that it sometimes took anarchistic forms. . . .

The truth about the Old Slavs is probably to be sought in a balance between the Slavic and non-Slavic scholars.

Once upon a time the Balkan peninsula was the homeland not only of the Hellenes, whose culture has never been surpassed, but of a number of other well-defined nations—the Macedonians, the Thracians, the Illyrians, to mention only the most important ones. By the end of the sixth century, however, owing to extended pressure upon the peoples by the imperialist rivalries of Rome and Byzantium and the

Franks and Avars, and the consequent wars and upheavals, little was left of them. Both Rome and Byzantium were slowly ripening into material for Gibbon; Greece as a great civilization was on the chute; there was general disorganization . . . and the sizable region with its craggy mountain ranges and forests, numerous rivers and fertile valleys was anybody's for the taking.

So, feeling the necessity or urge to migrate from their swampy lands in Russia, the Slavs had little difficulty in spreading southwest over the peninsula and directly west across the Danube as far as the Tyrol and thence straight down through the gorges above Trieste toward Venetia. They encountered opposition both from the dying nations and from the Byzantine and Roman commanders of imperial frontier garrisons. But they kept on coming.

The Slavs just kept on coming, clad mostly in sheepskins and driving their herds before them.

Records dating to that period, or not long after, show this migration as something elemental. It could hardly be called an invasion—certainly not a military one. Only a small proportion of the migrants had bows and arrows. The surging multitude was unarmed, an endless mass of men, women and children in the tide of a self-compelling advance. There were no big leaders with any sort of clear design. What was behind the impulse? Hunger? Greed? Desire to get away from the rapine of aggressive neighbors and to appropriate a rich and largely depopulated country? One theory is as good as another. Byzantine and Roman frontier officers had never seen anything like it. They could kill a few hundred here or a thousand there; they couldn't kill them all. It was impossible to stop their movement, or to prevent their settlement.

The Slavs inundated nearly all of Southeastern Europe, drowning out the remnants of most of the nationalities which had been there before them. In the Balkans proper only the group we now call Albanians, the mixed descendants of Illyrians and Macedonians, were left more or less intact, owing to the height of their mountains and the infertility of their land.

The wave reached deep into Greece. It touched the Bosporus, stretched to the shores of the Aegean, and shot clear across the width of the peninsula to the Adriatic. In the north, encountering no substantial resistance, some of the Slavic tribes penetrated as far as the site of Berlin.

It is quite probable that the Old Slavs' departure from the Dniester-

Oder-Bug-Pripet-Dnieper country for the depopulated Balkans was motivated by their desire to evade further warfare. Perhaps they thought the mountain ranges in their new homeland would guard them from assault. If so, they originated and followed a fallacy. The Balkan mountains did not protect them, except a few for possibly a century or so. The mountains immensely complicated their life in other ways.

Back in Russia they had lived on level or gently undulating land—one of the principal reasons why they were one people, one "race." Their tribal villages were separated by rivers, streams and swamps, to say nothing of local antagonisms; but people in one settlement could yell to or at people in another. They saw their neighbors pretty often, even when they met only to knock each other on the head, or steal a girl, or when they were all victims of the same widespread spring flood and had to take to rafts and float about together.

It was different in the Balkans. Mountains came between them. Different tribes settled in different valleys and had no contact for decades, even centuries. There were no great floods in the Balkans to promote through misfortune an inter-tribal community of feeling and interest. All this strengthened the inclination to separateness which co-existed with satisfaction in belonging to a big "race"—how big, no one ever knew.

Of course, except in a few out-of-the-way valleys, most of the newcomers were not left alone, ever; not in the Balkans nor in the territories north of the peninsula. They were caught in the Roman-Frankish-Byzantine contest for supremacy. But this only added spiritual and political separation to their geographical barriers. The Slavs in the Balkans and those to the north and west ceased to be one people, one "race"; or perhaps I should say that they lost their potential oneness, becoming a number of nations with different names and religions even while they retained the same or similar speech.

During that period of profound disorganization and flux in the Balkans—from one thousand to twelve hundred years ago—the new settlers deeply affected—and also were affected by—the peninsular nations which they did not simply drown out.

In Greece the virile barbarians got into the biological process right off. At the same time the hangovers of the old Hellenic culture, now under Byzantine sponsorship, worked subtly on the Old Slavs, introducing them to order and discipline. The culturally superior Greeks assimilated the Slavs; on the other hand, by the tenth century there

were few Greeks outside the islands who did not have some Slavic blood.

In the easternmost Balkans, the Slavs tangled with a tough breed called *Bugari*, kin to the Huns and Avars. They conquered the Slavs physically, whereupon the two peoples mixed with results that were the reverse of what happened in Greece. The Bulgarians took on the Slavic culture and language, but continued to call themselves Bulgarians. Within a century they became a Slavic people.

The Bulgarians were the first people after the Slavs' arrival to wax great in the Balkans. They had long had contact with the anti-Byzantine Turks, who were strong in the depths of Asia Minor, and had cooperated with them in squeeze-plays on the Eastern Empire. They developed a lively, wide-ranging trade. They went into mining. Their soldiers wore metal armor. The robes of their kings and *boyars* (nobles) were studded with precious stones. After the influx of the Slavic migrants, their power grew so fast that it began to rival Byzantium's. In fact early in the ninth century they defeated the Byzantines in a fierce battle, slaying the Emperor Nicephorous; whereupon their King Kroom used his skull as a drinking cup.

Thus a third imperialism got going in the Balkans. By the middle of the ninth century, exploiting the general anarchy, Bulgarian authority spread by conquest through most of the peninsula and northward into the Danubian Basin. It reached its apex and also its sudden decline some fifty years later.

A fourth imperialism, that of the Franks, was very active to the north of the Balkans in central Europe. It pressed down on the Slavic settlers.

These events took place over about three hundred years and touched most of the tribes huddling in the valleys. Under their prodding and the influence of geography, the descendants of the Old Slavs were forced into defensive alliances and political definitions which led to division and to new labels. Since they could not all agree on how to repel Roman, Frankish, Byzantine and/or Bulgarian domination, they began to crystallize into separate peoples.

During their first hundred years in the Balkans most of the Slavic tribes were organized in so-called *zhupaniyé*, governed by *zhupani* or chieftains. Then, either from considerations of defense or from personal ambition or both, some of the chieftains gathered several tribes into *veliké zhupaniyé*, of which they became *veliki zhupani* or grand chieftains. One thing led to another, to larger combinations.

New nations emerged—Serbians and Croatians; and new countries —Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia.

The Serbians called themselves *Srbi*; the Croatians, *Hrvati* or *Horvati*. The origins of these names are obscure. Some Slavists trace them back into the dimness of the Old Slav's pre-Balkan history; others believe they issued from the new politics in the new homelands. The Slavs to the northwest of the peninsula became *Sloventsi*, Slovenians, a variation of *Sloveni*.

In a Byzantine treatise on the contemporary Balkans, published in the late tenth century and attributed to Porphyrogenetus, otherwise also known as Emperor Constantine VII, the Serbians and Croatians are described as one and the same people with two names. Around the year 1000 all South-Slavs still spoke the same tongue; and to this day, as I have mentioned, Serbian and Croatian speech is identical, a development from Old Slavic, which is now used only in Orthodox religious services. Slovenian is a different development from the same beginning, a separate language easily understood by educated Serbians and Croatians.

But the most important difference among these peoples was religious. Two kinds of Christianity were offered to or rather inflicted on them. It was about eleven hundred years ago that imperialist Byzantium, by then Greek Orthodox, was pushing its faith westward, while Catholic Rome, aided by commercial Venice, was spreading its doctrine eastward and northward. The purpose of each Church was not so much to advance religion as to strengthen its political power against the other. And one result of this game was that the Serbians, along with the Bulgarians, became Greek Orthodox, and the Croatians and Slovenians went Roman Catholic.

Christianity introduced the leaders of their new converts to the written word; but while Catholicism gave the Croatians and Slovenians the Latin alphabet, the Bulgarians and Serbians received the Cyrillic alphabet used by the Orthodox Church. Before the spread of printing hundreds of years later, this was not too serious. Later, however, the difference in script began to matter very much in the cleavage between eastern and western South-Slavs. When a good many people learned how to read, they could not understand each other's writings, although they were in the same language.

In its early stages the dual conversion was a brutal business, for the inclination to resist it was widespread. It took about a hundred years to cut paganism's hold on the people. Then Christianized Slavs who had not previously felt any particular antagonism began to fight

one another over the religious issue, which by that time was mixed up with nationalism—that is, in the top men, the feudal lords; the masses of people had little to say about anything. Both Serbian and Croatian chiefs or dukes were forming states, and each wanted to convert and annex as many tribes as possible. In this rivalry some of the chiefs changed their religion two or three times. Tension and bloodshed rose so high that finally Roman and Byzantine statesmen and ecclesiastics got together and fixed on the river Drina as the boundary between Orthodoxy and Catholicism—each taking about half of the South-Slavs. Indeed, the Drina had already been the demarcation point between the Eastern and Western Empire for some centuries.

But it was easier to point at a line on a crude map than to make it stick in the ferment of life. On either side were Slavs who now took their religion more seriously than did the Christian Powers. Sometimes they were egged on by non-Slavic missionaries of the Holy See and by apostles of the Greek faith. Proselytizing went on full tilt for a couple of centuries; both Roman Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy jumped the Drina into regions where they were not supposed to be. This laid the ground for a confusion the like of which the world had never seen anywhere, and for borderlines among nationalities and religions that suggest fever charts.

Before a Serbian, for instance, took to Orthodox Christianity he was a Serbian only because he lived in a country which happened to be called Serbia; now he was a Serbian also because he was Orthodox. On the other hand, a Croatian was now Croatian because he was a Catholic as well as an inhabitant of a country named Croatia.

At first most of the people of the country called Rashka—which spread over part of present-day Bosnia and reached down into Sandjak—were just Slavs, not Serbians or Croatians. The same was true of the people of Zeta, the original name of Montenegro. The larger portion of these lands lay on the Roman Catholic side of the Drina; but a thousand years ago, while the struggle between the two faiths was still going on, they were anybody's game . . . and so when a Slav there became a Catholic, he also became somewhat of a Croatian; while a neighbor, converted to *pravoslavlyé*, or Orthodoxy, became a Serbian.

In Montenegro Orthodoxy won. In Bosnia, however, as well as all along the Croatia-Serbia border, both Churches had their innings.

The upshot was that among people of identical background and speaking the same language a heterogeneity was created on both

religious and national grounds. From time to time the majority of people caught in it tried instinctively to displace this heterogeneity, or minimize it. They tried in vain. Small but excessively vocal minorities—the pan-Serbians, the ultra-Croatians—were always on hand to raise a cry and waive the issue.

This is the condensed, oversimplified background of the Serbo-Croatian insanity which has been flaring up intermittently for a thousand years and which Hitler and Himmler brought to an artificial and horrible climax in the Yugoslav nightmare of '41-'43. It begins and ends with the peoples themselves; with their limitations, their "backwardness," their vulnerability to the wider epidemic insanity of the "more enlightened" world.

Rome and Byzantium laid the basis for the Serbo-Croatian, Orthodox-Catholic lunacy. Then came the Turks, who added Mohammedanism to the Balkan religious complexity. After that came Vienna and Budapest . . . and St. Petersburg . . . and Paris and London . . . and Berlin . . . and Rome again ——

War following war. Frustration. Oppression. Cross-purposes. Hope against hope.[6]

A Thousand Years, All Pretty Bad

From their Russian homeland the Slavs brought a democratic institution called *zadruga,* a clan or family cooperative, which some of the tribes tried to extend and adjust to the wider forms of government necessary in their new homelands.

It seems that the Slovenians—the bulk of whom were concentrated in Carniola, Styria and Corinthia—were the first South-Slavs to attempt the formation of an independent state under a council of representative headmen. This attempt was made around the middle of the seventh century, some fifty or sixty years after they had completed their migration. And for a historic instant it looked as though they might succeed. Before they could turn around, however, the Avars and the Franks were pressing down upon them; the Slovenians were obliged to relinquish their independence and to join the Czech state.

Under King Samo the Czecho-Slovenian empire flourished from the Sudeten Mountains to the Adriatic. But right after his death it fell apart under the blows of its enemies. In the following chaos, the Slovenian lands were overrun by German armed gangs preceded by missionaries zealous for converts "not so much to the ideas of Christ," as one historian puts it, "as for the benefit of the German rulers." The Slovenians resisted—"not so much the Cross as the sword"—but in the course of a few decades they passed under German domination and took on the Cross. Charlemagne included their country in the "Holy Roman Empire of German Nationality"; later it became part of the Hapsburg domain.

By the tenth century the Slovenians' *zadruga* democracy had been supplanted by a feudal system that turned the free tillers of the soil into serfs under German nobles and high ecclesiastics. For hundreds of years there were no Slovenian schools or books. The Slovenians seemed doomed as a national group.

Why they survived has been suggested in the account of Josip Vidmar's ideas. Here I might emphasize that the Protestant Reformation, though it barely touched them before the Counter-Reformation stamped it out, was of infinite help in sustaining the Slovenian national character. In 1551 its leader, Primozh Trubar, a son of a serf, gave them the first book in their own language. He started a movement called Friends of the New Gospel, which lifted religion out of its stagnation and recognized the importance of public education. In 1563 the Slovenians got their first *gymnasium*; in 1575, their first publishing house; in 1584, their first grammar. All of which provided the oppressed people with a new outlook on life, a ray of hope. It stiffened their mute, stolid peasant insistence on the right before God to remain themselves, to hang onto their lyrical forms and values.

The Croatians, faring somewhat better than the Slovenians, began to crystallize into a nation toward the end of the eighth century. There were more of them, and they had won the respect of the Byzantines and Franks. In addition to a piece of the Adriatic coast, they controlled some much-used trade routes through the central and western Balkans, and could not be dispossessed. They were able to withstand the declining might of the Avars.

Croatia's accession to power was backed by the Roman Church, mindful of the zeal in "converting" unattached tribes which had been displayed by the Croatian headmen when the rivalry between Catholicism and Orthodoxy was at its height. The Holy See, together with Venice, helped the Croatian upper class to break away from Byzantine suzerainty and to achieve political independence under Croatian kings.

The upper class were the feudal lords, a couple of thousand people who dominated the couple of million constituting the masses. Feudalism had spread down from Central Europe. A rigid system of special privilege, it worked for separateness and cleavage, against unity in the Balkans. It built states from the top down. Or, more correctly, it built them on top as instruments of exploitation of the people below. That was how all European states began.

At its peak, the feudal state of Croatia included Bosnia and reached down past Trogir and Split, in central Dalmatia, with their hardy, resourceful sailors equally skilled at fishing, piracy and commerce.

Croatia just missed becoming a considerable state—for two reasons. One, because the ruling group's insistence upon independence

was never quite matched by its inner strength. Due to the intense religio-national competition fostered by Rome and Constantinople in which the Croatian leaders had engaged in order to rise in the Balkan heap, the country was inherently confused. Its potential strength lay in the peasant masses, but they were dormant. They lived in their primitive villages and held onto their Old-Slavic *zadrugé* and "heart culture"—decency, friendliness, hospitality. Between them and the nobles there was almost no relation except that between exploited and exploiter. The peasant was *kmet*, serf; the noble was master—not very different from the German noble or ecclesiastic who lorded it over the Slovenian serf, or any other noble for that matter. Nor was there any unity among the nobles; they were always fighting with each other.

The other reason for Croatia's eclipse after its first brilliant century was the growing strength of Hungary, recently occupied by the competent, hard-driving, Slav-hating Magyars. The Hungarian kings reached for the Adriatic coast clear across the Croatian mainland. Sharp contention ensued. Wars. But the Magyars were too much for the dissident Croatian nobility and their mercenaries, and eventually the country was forced to recognize Hungarian supremacy. In 1102 it became part of the Magyar state where it remained for the next four hundred years. The Croatian ruling caste, by cooperating with the Magyar overlords at the expense of the peasantry, managed to retain its own *Sabor* (Diet), judiciary and army, and some financial independence.

By-and-by a new blow fell. The Turks spread over the Balkans and began their forays northward into Eastern and Central Europe. In 1526 on the plains of Mohacz they defeated the Hungarians . . . whereupon the Croatian nobles, realizing they were too weak to face the Crescent alone, looked around for another power to which they might attach their country; it was actually theirs: they owned the land and the people. Austria was their only possible choice and the Sabor "elected" Archduke Ferdinand king of Croatia. The Hapsburgs took over the country for its value as a strategic place to stop the northbound Turks.

Austrian generals measured off a wide ribbon of Croatian territory bordering on Serbia and Bosnia, both already under Turkish domination, and called it the Military Frontier—the "Bloody Frontier"—between European Christianity and Asiatic Islam. Owing to the Orthodox-Catholic rivalry five or six hundred years earlier, the border was a fantastically long line, curving, jerking and zigzagging

in all directions. Now refugees from conquered Serbia and Bosnia poured over it in droves; some fleeing for their lives, others escaping from lesser dangers and oppressions.

Because these Serbians wanted nothing more than to fight the Turks, the Austrians—the Emperor himself—welcomed them to Croatia. They were admitted as freemen, while the Croatian *kmeti* were virtual slaves. The Austrians helped them to settle in regions like Voyvodina and Slavonia which had been devastated by the Turks. Occasionally the Serbians were given pieces of subdivided feudal estates owned by Croatian nobles and Catholic dignitaries.

This favoritism greatly disturbed the Croatian feudal lords, the Catholic hierarchy, the ultra-Croatians. It stirred and deepened the heterogeneity along the border. After the Turks ceased to be a menace, the lords and dignitaries tried to recover their lands, but in vain.

The Croatians also fought strenuously in the Austrian struggles against the Turks. In fact, as a direct consequence of the Turkish threat, the Hapsburg empire was unified and strengthened. When the peril diminished, however, and later when it disappeared, nationalism pure and simple came into its own again.

It flared up late in the seventeenth century, when the heads of two vigorous Croatian noble families, Zrinski and Frankopan, who had joined some Magyar magnates in a plot against the Hapsburgs, were executed and their estates were confiscated and turned over to German nobles. Thereupon the Croatian upper class fought for their "rights" and eventually regained some of them under Budapest within the new dual setup of Austria-Hungary.

Through Croatian nationalism in the late eighteenth century there ran a vague anti-Serbianism synonymous with anti-Orthodoxy. This sentiment was never strongly shared by more than two or three percent of the population; but it was the articulate, influential two or three percent. And Vienna and Budapest, with their "divide and rule" technique, saw to it that Croatian uneasiness over the Serbians in Croatia never slackened. To this end, they gave special privileges to the Orthodox Church and encouraged the holding of Serbian congresses in Croatia. In 1790, Emperor Leopold II confirmed the land grants to Serbian refugees in the face of the Croatian nobles' repeated demands for the return of their properties along the Bloody Frontier.

At the same time, under the same stimuli plus the inspiration of the French Revolution, a sounder kind of nationalism appeared in

Croatia, a nationalism which, harking back to the seventh and eighth centuries, back to Porphyrogenetus' observation, regarded the Serbians as a brother-nation.

The Croatian peasant, however, which is to say over ninety percent of the country, was scarcely touched by this politico-cultural ferment. Possessed of intrinsic strength and vitality, he merely worked and suffered, produced, and kept the country going and fed the parasitic elements in Vienna and Budapest, to say nothing of Zagreb, the capital of his own country which wasn't his. Intelligent enough to see that pretty nearly everything was wrong with the world, he looked sad. Mulish and mystic, he was slow to act. Only once did he rise in a big *buna* or rebellion. In 1573, about the time that Trubar appeared among the Slovenians, the Croatian peasant followed the fabled Matiya Gubets, himself a peasant, who led a brief, unsuccessful assault on the feudal system. On the principal square in the city of Zagreb, in front of the principal church in the city and by order of the Bishop, the "king of the peasants" was chained to a red-hot iron "throne," "crowned" with a red-hot iron circlet, and burned to death. . . . The Croatian peasant then made Gubets into his very own Jesus Christ.

In the early twelfth century, all efforts to unite them in one country having failed, the Serbian *zhupaniyé* and *veliké zhupaniyé* (equivalent to duchies and grandduchies) were acknowledging the suzerainty of the Byzantine emperors. Then the remarkable Nemanya family emerged to lead them.

In 1159 Stefan Nemanya was veliki zhupan of the primitive state of Rashka. A man of rare wisdom, initiative and personal magnetism, he largely succeeded in uniting the Serbians before his death in the year 1200. Early in his career he was a kind of Catholic; that is, following the custom of the times among ruling princes, he asked the Pope of Rome to send him a crown. The Pope did so and Nemanya became king and the founder of the Serbian kingdom and the Nemanyich dynasty, which reigned for almost two hundred years. He drew his people into nationhood and laid the basis for the Medieval Serbian Empire.

His son Rastko entered a monastery on Mount Athos, the center of Eastern Orthodoxy, and, under the name of Sava, was the first archbishop of the Serbian branch of the Orthodox Church. Establishing eight bishoprics in various parts of the kingdom and encouraging public education under the leadership of the priests, he put Orthodoxy

on a firm footing among his people. He made it their national religion, under a national hierarchy. The people made him a saint and raised him to a historic importance equal to his father's. Curiously enough, St. Sava's Orthodox movement in Serbia was encouraged by the Vatican and by Rome generally. It was part of their strategy to weaken Byzantium by fostering movements in its territory which would lead to schisms in the Eastern Orthodox Church, to local hierarchies, to small and ingrown national units.

However, in spite of the motives of the power that manipulated his career, Sava was a big and good man. His religious movement laid a part of the basis for the future *serpstvo*, Serbian nationalism, and for extreme pan-Serbianism as well; but it also released much of the people's latent energy and talent in the Middle Ages. It was a great cultural leap ahead. It knitted the people together. It brought out the artists whose frescoes adorn the walls of many monasteries in Serbia and are regarded by some critics as forerunners of Renaissance art.

The Nemanyich dynasty had sharp ups and downs, for the period was one of continuous crisis due to the impending collapse of the rotten and hard-pressed Byzantine empire, punctuated by sporadic attacks from the Turks. The climax came with Stefan Dushan, who began his reign in 1331.

Nothing could save Byzantium and then it would be only a matter of years before the fanatical Ottoman armies would invade the Balkans. What to do? How to keep Islam off European soil?

A handsome giant with a full beard, Dushan possessed endless courage, exceptional intelligence and great deliberation in action. He decided to replace the Byzantine system in the Balkans with a Serbo-Greek empire which could fight the Turkish invasion when it came.

Dushan attacked the Greeks and overran Albania, Epirus, Thessaly and most of Macedonia. He made Skoplyé his capital and in 1346 was crowned "Emperor of the Serbians and the Greeks." The man had a driving, urgent purpose and the necessary energy and brutality to follow it through. He knew that Turkish domination would be much worse than Byzantine. The Turks levied a terrible tribute on conquered peoples, carrying off their best eight-year-old boys who were then turned into Mohammedans and janizaries, the core of the Sultan's armies for future conquest. The Balkans *had* to be prepared to resist them. Dushan seemed to be thinking of a Balkan federation of Orthodox lands under his rule.

But the Greeks and Bulgarians did not see it that way. The Greek

Patriarch went so far as to excommunicate Dushan and all his Serbians. By 1355 the only protection against the Turks was attack. Dushan had a splendid army, which included some Greeks and Albanians, and the prospect of success was good. He would take Constantinople. But before the year was out, before the campaign got well under way, the first and last Serbian emperor—now called Dushan *Silni*, the Mighty—suddenly died.

Dushan's Serbo-Greek empire fell to pieces. His son Urosh was only nineteen. The boy's uncle, Simeon, and most of the provincial *knezi* or princes were small, unimaginative men. The imperial idea now looked too big to them, the Turkish danger less formidable. They declared their independence from the empire and continued to rule in separate centers and with different aims. The only exception was Vukashin who declared himself King of Macedonia and tried to follow Dushan's policy, but without success. In 1371 he fell in the battle of Maritsa in which the Turks destroyed his army, the most substantial obstacle to their advance into the South-Slavic territories. In the same year the Nemanyich dynasty ended with the death of young Urosh.

There followed three years of chaos among Serbian princes during which their lands could easily have been seized. But the Turks were either cautious or in no hurry. Finally a prince named Lazar Hrebelyanovich, ruler of the regions along the Morava and Danube rivers, modest in manner but endowed with a touch of brooding greatness, rose above the turmoil and in 1374 a combination of Serbian lords chose him for the new ruler of all the Serbians.

But by this time the crisis was extreme. And Lazar knew it. He did not call himself king—that would be sinful vanity in the face of what was about to happen. He tried to form a Christian League against the Turks, but he did not get very far. He did succeed in persuading the Greek Patriarch to withdraw the ban of excommunication from the Serbians. In everything else he came to a dead end. When the Turks occupied Nish, the crossroads of Balkan trade, they won control of most of the central Balkans. This led some of the provincial rulers to become vassals of Sultan Murad—they were the precursors of the twentieth century's Milan Stoyadinovich, Prince-Regent Paul and Milan Nedich.

Things went from worse to impossible.

In 1387, however, it suddenly seemed to Lazar that Turkish power near Serbia was badly distributed. Also he heard that Murad was having serious trouble in Bulgaria and within the Porte. So he

made military alliances with neighboring Serbian rulers and for two years they did the Turks much damage. Then in 1389, after subduing the recalcitrant Bulgarians, Murad turned on the Serbians in full force . . . and on Tuesday, June 15, his army met Lazar's on Kossovo Polyé, "the Plain of the Blackbirds," in their last fateful battle.

On Kossovo—as again in 1941, five hundred thirty-odd years later—the best in the spirit of the South-Slavs converged with all the weaknesses, all the confusion of their past and present. One of Lazar's allies failed to appear with his army. Fighting on the side of the Turks were some of their Christian vassals. And in this final test, Lazar could not trust some of his highest officers; preceding events had twisted many a thought in many a Serbian head. The night before the battle Lazar spoke forebodingly in his tent. He knew it was the end.

At dawn the battle opened and soon men were fighting "in blood up to their knees." Twelve thousand Turks perished. Of the Serbians only a handful survived. Lazar was captured and beheaded. Sultan Murad was killed on the battlefield.

None of the big Christian powers had so much as thought of helping the Serbians; but when the news arrived of this fearful battle in the heart of the Balkans, *Te Deums* were sung first in Catholic Dalmatia, then in Italy, then in France, celebrating the "great Christian victory" symbolized by the death of Murad. It took the world a long time to realize that it was the Turks who had really won.

Meantime, except for tiny Montenegro, thanks to the natural defense of its craggy, jagged mountains, all Serbian lands passed under Turkish domination. Lazar's widow appealed to the Pope, offering him her country, offering her people to Catholicism, in the hope of securing the aid of Catholic Europe against the Moslems. There was no reply. Had the Pope responded, Serbians might be Catholics today. . . .

For seventy years the Serbians lived under the Nediches and Paveliches, the Pétains and Lavals and Quislings and Horthys of that day; then in 1459 Sultan Mohammed II occupied outright most of the territory and put it as a pashalik under the direct government of the Porte.

This regime lasted for three hundred forty-five years . . . an ordeal the like of which no other nation ever survived. It was oppression of the cruelest kind in which self-seeking Serbians

cooperated with the occupation, aiding it against the *rayah*. They were often half-Turks or of mixed Greek, Turkish and Serbian blood—the *tsintsari* type, lacking a sense of identification with the people. To the people they were outcasts, not of themselves, not Serbians.

What saved the Serbian spirit in the ordeal? For the Serbian spirit was not only saved but enhanced during those four centuries, while at the same time it became terribly complicated. Part of the answer is that the Turks did not try to stamp out the people's religion, although they turned some of the Orthodox churches into stables and razed others; the best they converted into mosques. This they did because the Christian manner of worshipping was offensive to them. But Christians were allowed to pray inconspicuously in their own or their neighbors' houses. This was the one freedom remaining to them, the one vestige of their national and cultural entity. Since it was the people's only channel of expression, it bit deep into their unconscious and mixed inextricably with the most elemental needs and hopes. Prayer meetings assumed political implications. The Serbian character developed a subtlety it had not had before. People unconsciously wove God into their aspirations for freedom, into their plots and passive hostility against the Turks. It was this feeling of God's presence in their daily lives, of God's—and St. Sava's—championship of their cause, that sustained them in what was at first vague wishful thinking but which became more concrete and to the point as Turkish power began to wane under the double pressure of attack by Austria and Russia, and the destructive antagonisms invariably engendered by imperialist aggression.

The Orthodox faith in occupied Serbia gradually altered into a religion that concerned itself less with the Life Hereafter than with Life Right Here and Now. And the more the Serbians turned from looking beyond the grave, the more pervasive in their daily lives became the Orthodox Church. A spirit of cabal, intrigue and proselytism dominated their thoughts and actions. The priest who went from house to house and the monk gathering alms for his monastery were matchless political agents in the Great Plot gestating in the people.

But in and around the Plot all sorts of other things developed in Serbian life. For example: among the one-time Serbian boys in the Turkish janizaries were many whose split personalities led them to be fierce Mohammedans one day and to want to help the Serbians

the next. The bewildering results prompted the Serbians to trust only good Orthodox Serbians and eventually, in critical matters, only their brothers and cousins, and their closest neighbors and friends—their *pobratimi* or god-brothers.

The Cult of Kossovo

THE SUBTLETY THAT FORMED IN THE SERBIANS' INMOST BEING under the pressure of Turkish rule was what kept them going from day to day. And gradually out of it—and through the whole ordeal—there unfolded in these people an extraordinary poetic talent which began to express itself in the so-called *pyesmé*—folk songs and ballads passed on from father to son by word of mouth. They were not written down till the nineteenth century . . . and in another hundred years they profoundly influenced world events.

These pyesmé are fairly well known in England, where the first translation of them—by John Bowring in a tiny volume, *Serbian Popular Poetry*—appeared as early as 1829 and was followed by at least half a dozen other collections. And they are not unknown in the United States. But their full significance has not begun to be appreciated.

To the Balkanite the past has never been the "dry bones" and "faded wardrobe" that America's past was to Emerson or the "bucket of ashes" that it is to Carl Sandburg. To the South-Slav it has always been a plain of bloody mud. And soon after Kossovo, following a spell of numbness in their subversive national life punctuated by fits of deep agony and religio-political exultation, the Serbian people began to dig into their blood-soaked mud, especially that of the Plain of the Blackbirds. They began to heap it into history; and to draw from it various threads and fibers, and weave them into a tough spiritual bootstrap by which to lift themselves out of the gloom of servitude up to comparative freedom, whence they would vault into a fuller light.

They did lift themselves ultimately. Meantime, the bootstrap turned imperceptibly into a force of terrific intensity. It aided in the shattering of the Turkish empire. It fired the shots at Sarajevo in 1914. It and the Masaryk movement in Bohemia and Slovakia

destroyed Austria-Hungary. And it was the most vital single factor in the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918-'19—a Yugoslavia that was not at the start and never became what it should have been partly because this curious spiritual bootstrap was never understood, not even by the Serbians themselves. Creators too seldom know their creations—seldom can imagine what the creations may create.

For some decades after the Battle of Kossovo few Serbians had any clear notion of what had been lost and what it would mean to the future. Defeat creeps slowly upon a people. The various Serbian states did not disappear in one fell swoop. They continued to be governed by some of the same princes who had been Turkish vassals and now became Turkish quislings. They were the ones the nineteenth century's great Montenegrin poet-statesman Peter Petrovich Nyegosh had in mind when he wrote in *The Mountain Wreath*:

> The Serbian magnates—may their name rot out!—
> They scatter'd broadcast Discord's evil seed,
> And poisoned thus the life-springs of our race.
> Our Serbian chiefs, most miserable cowards,
> The Serbian stock did heartlessly betray.

And when finally the Turks took over completely, here and there the people experienced a feeling of relief. Out-and-out conquest was better than the ruthless exploitation they had suffered under their own feudal lords.

For a time Serbia seemed pretty inert to anyone on the outside looking in. The people hugged their Orthodox faith and developed their new character, their subversive attitude that the Turk could not put his finger on. Also, in some localities conditions, while bad enough, could have been worse; that is, until the Empire began to decay, until Sobieski, King of Poland, drove back the Turks from the gates of Vienna. . . . Then under their disintegrating, corruption-ridden rule, the clamp of oppression tightened inexorably; and as one dark decade followed another, Serbians turned for solace and strength to the "good old days" when they were a nation. Out of the Turkish death-grip, the ultimate depth of defeat, something began to be born.

Kossovo——They began to get flashes of its meaning.

Some of these people were priests; others were descendants of fighters in battles against the Turks long ago. Some had been in Turkish torture-chambers. There were cripples who hobbled about

playing their one-stringed *guslé*, and singing to their accompaniment. Tradition has it that most of them were blind minstrels who saw farther into the meanings of things than people with two eyes.

They sang of Kossovo . . . of Lazar, whom they promoted to "Tsar" . . . of his dearest friend Milosh Obilich, whom they made into the slayer of the Sultan Murad . . . of his wife's nine brothers, the Yugoviches, who perished in the battle——

The bards made up the lines they sang about these men. Then the people hummed them in fields and woods and dwellings, one strange and wonderful improvization following another.

Since very little had been written down about Kossovo, it begot a vigorous verbal tradition. The people, just anybody and everybody, began to invent explanations of the crushing catastrophe. They made lines about it, which the peripatetic bards embellished and expanded; the people took up the new lines and added to them.

The Turks looked on. The blind and hobbling bards and their primitive chanting seemed harmless. But they were singing history, making sure the nation would not forget it.

The people turned Poet—the "People" in the truest national sense, meaning a country of virtually a single class; for by then the well-to-do Serbians who were unwilling to become Turks had been ground down to the general level of bare existence. Everybody was together in the primitive situation which exists before "man" is divided into "men." It admitted but one condition of life, one manner of thought, one combination of sensations and associations. And thus it encouraged common urges, mass strivings, collective inspiration.

Collective inspiration came to the Serbian people and they told the story of Kossovo thus:[7]

The Sultan Murad o'er Kossovo comes
With banners and drums.

I

A gray bird, a falcon, comes flying apace
From Jerusalem, from the Holy Place;
And he bears a light swallow abroad.
It is not a gray bird, a falcon, God wot!
But the Saint Elias; and it is not
A light swallow that he bears from afar,
But a letter from the Mother of God
To the Tsar who in Kossovo stays.
And the letter is dropt on the knees of the Tsar;
And these are the words that it says:—

"Lazarus, Prince of a race that I love,
Which empire choosest thou?
That of the heaven above?
Or that of the earth below?
If thou choose thee an earthly realm,
Saddle horse, belt, spur, and away!
Warriors, bind ye both sabre and helm,
And rush on the Turks, and they
With their army whole shall perish.
But, if rather a heavenly crown thou cherish,
At Kossovo build ye a temple fair.
There no foundations of marble lay,
But only silk of the scarlet dye.
Range ye the army in battle array,
And let each and all full solemnly
Partake of the blessed sacrament there.
For then of a certainty know
Ye shall utterly perish, both thou,
And thine army all; and the Turk shall be
Lord of the land that is under thee."

When the Tsar he read these words,
His thoughts were as long and as sharp as swords.
"God of my fathers, what shall I choose?
If a heavenly empire, then must I lose
All that is dearest to me upon earth;
But if that the heavenly here I refuse,
What then is the earthly worth?
It is but a day,
It passeth away,
And the glory of earth full soon is o'er,
And the glory of God is more and more."

— — — — — — — — — —.

Then he sent for the Serbian Patriarch:
With him twelve bishops to Kossovo went.
It was at the lifting of the dark:
They ranged the army in battle array,
And the army all full solemnly
Received the blessed sacrament,
And hardly was this done, when lo!
The Turks came rushing on Kossovo.

II

Milosh Obilich:

Ivan Kosanchich, my *pobratim*,
What of the Turk? How deem ye of him?
Is he strong, is he many, is he near? . . .

Ivan Kosanchich:

Milosh Obilich, my brother dear,
I have lookt on the Turk in his pride.
He is strong, he is many, he is near,
His tents are on every side.
Were we all of us hewn into morsels, and salted,
Hardly, I think, should we salt him his meat.
Two whole days have I journeyed, nor halted,
Toward the Turk, near the Turk, round him, and never
Could I number his numbers, or measure his end.
From Eràble to Sazlia, brother, my feet
Have wander'd; from Sazlia round by the river,
Where the river comes round to the bridge with a bend;
And over the bridge to the town of Zvétchan;
From Zvétchan to Tchéchan, and further, and ever
Further, and over the mountains, wherever
Foot may fall, or eye may scan,
I saw nought but the Mussulman.

Eastward and westward, and southward and nor'ward,
Scaling the hillside, and scathing the gorse,
Horseman to horseman, and horse against horse;
Lances like forests when forests are black;
Standards like clouds flying backward and forward,
White tents like snowdrifts piled up at the back.
The rain may, in torrents, fall down out of heaven,
But never the earth will it reach:
Nothing but horsemen, nothing but horses,
Thick as the sands which the wild river courses
Leave, after tempest, in heaps on the beach.
Murad, for pasture, hath given
To his horsemen the plain of Mazguite.
Lances a-ripple all over the land,
Tost like the bearded and billowy wheat
By the winds of the mountain driven
Under the mountain slab.
Murad looks down in command
Over Sitnitza and Lab.

Milosh:

Answer me, Ivan, answer ye me,
Where may the tent of Murad be?
His milk-white tent, may one see it afar
O'er the plain, from the mountain, or out of the wood?
For I have sworn to the Prince Lazar
A solemn vow upon Holy Rood,
To bring him the head of the Turkish Tsar,
And set my feet in his infidel blood.

Ivan:

Art mad, my *pobratim*, art mad?
Where may the tent be, the tent of Murad?
In the midst of a million eyes and ears:
In the midst of a million swords and spears,
In the heart of the camp of the Turk.
Fatal thy vow is, and wild is the work;
For hadst thou the wings of the falcon, to fly
Fleeter than lightning, along the deep sky,
The wings of the falcon, though fleet be they,
Would never bear thee thy body away.

Milosh:

O Ivan, my brother,
(Tho' not by the blood, yet more dear than all other,)
See thou say nothing of this to our lord,
Lest ye sorrow his heart; and say never a word,
Lest our friends be afflicted, and fail. But thou
Shalt rather answer to who would know,
And boldly aver to the Tsar,
"The Turk is many, but more are we,
And easy and light is the victory. . . ."

III

Lazarus, lord of the Serbs, the Tsar,
At Krouchevach high Slava doth hold.
Around him, sitting by cups of gold,
His sons and his seigneurs are.

To right, the reverend Yug Bogdan;
Round whom the nine young Yugovich;
To left, that thrice-accursèd man,
The traitor black, Vuk Brankovich;
And many a lord, along the board,

And last of all, in the knightly train,
Milosh, the manly Voyvod;
Next him, Serbian Voyvodes twain,
Ivan Kosanchich, his brother in God,
And Milan Toplitsa, a man without stain.
And the Tsar bade pour the purple wine,
And, brimming up his golden cup,
Lookt all adown that lordly line.

"To whom shall the King first pledge?" he began,
"If first to age, this health should be,
To no man do I drink but thee,
Revered old Yug Bogdan;
But if to rank or high degree,
Vuk Brankovich, I drink to thee.
If to friendship be the toast,
Brothers nine, I know not which
Amongst you all I love the most,
You gallant-hearted Yugovich!
If to beauty, then be thine,
Ivan, first the flowing wine.
If to length and strength of limb,
Then the wine to Milan brim,
No man measures height with him.
If to valour, more than even
Stature, beauty, friendship, age,
Our first honours should be given,
Then to Milosh must we pledge.
Yet, be that as it may be,
Milosh, I drink to none but thee!
Milosh, thy health!
Drink, man, drink!
Why should any man care to think?
Traitor or true, or friend or foe,
To thee I drain this goblet low;
And, ere to-morrow, at Kossovo,
Thou thy master hast betray'd
To the Turk, for wages paid,
(Friend or foe, whate'er befall,
True or traitor, what care I?)
The King drinks to thee in his hall,
Lip to lip, and eye to eye,
Pledge me now in sight of all;
And, since to thee I fill it up,
Take thou too this golden cup—

Milosh, thy health!"
Lightly Milosh bounded up,
Lightly caught the golden cup,
To the black earth bow'd his head,
And "Noble master, thanks!" he said,
"For the pledge thou pledgest me,
And thanks that, of thy courtesy,
Thou to me dost first allot,
A true, true health, O King, to thee,
To pledge back in this golden token;
Thanks for this, my lord, but not
For the words which thou hast spoken.

— — — — — — — — — —.

My true heart is sound and clean,
Traitor never have I been,
Traitor never will I be!
But at Kossovo to-morrow morn
I trust, as I am a living man,
A soldier and a Christian,
To go to the death for the true, true faith,
True to the last where my faith is sworn,
Careless of calumny, scorning scorn!
The traitor is sitting by thy side,
He toucheth thy robe, thy wine he drinketh,
To God and his king he hath foully lied,
Vuk Brankovich, the servile-eyed,
Christian false, and perjured friend!
God judge between us twain i' the end,
And perish he in the thought he thinketh!
To-morrow a noble day will be,
For at Kossovo all men shall see
What is the truth betwixt us two,
And who is traitor, and who is true.
And I swear by the living God on high
That judgeth us all, whate'er befall,
When at Kossovo upon battle plain,
Murad, the Turk, I have sought and slain
(Sought and slain, for I swore by the rood
To set my feet in his Turkish blood),
If God but grant me safe and sane
A living man to come again
Back to white-wall'd Krouchevach,
And there that traitor foul I catch,
Vuk Brankovich, I will have by the throat.

All men shall see it, and all men shall note,
For it shall be done in the light of the sun.
To my good war-lance I will fix his skull,
As a woman fixes a ball of wool
To her distaff when her spinning is done.
Then I will bear him to Kossovo,
Bear him back to the battle plain;
All men shall see it, and all men shall know
Who is the traitor of us twain."

IV

At the royal board a noble pair
Sit together, and full sad they are.
Lazarus and his Militsa fair,
The sweet-eyed Tsarina and the Tsar.
Troubled is the Tsar's broad brow,
The Tsarina's eyes are dim,
And, with tears that dare not flow,
The Tsarina says to him:—

"Lord Lazarus, O, golden crown
Of Serbia, and sweetheart my own!
To-morrow morn to Kossovo
With thee to the battle go
Servitors and Voyvodes.
I alone, in these abodes,
Vacant of thy voice, remain;
Hearing, haply, on the wind,
Murmurs of the battle plain;
Heavy of heart, and sad of mind,
Silent in sorrow, alone with pain.
— — — — — — — — — —.

Wherefore, lord, of my brothers nine,
The sons of Yug, our father old,
(Golden stars in a crown of gold!)
Let one, for once, be wholly mine.
Mine to witness the tears I weep;
Mine to solace the vigil I keep;
Mine alone, of my nine brothers,
To pray with me for those eight others;
Of brothers nine, but leave me one
To swear by when the rest be gone!"

And Lazarus, lord of the Serbs, replied:
"Militsa, sweetheart, wife true-eyed,
Of thy nine brothers, tell to me which
Thou lovest best, that he should rest
In our white palace to watch by thee.
Which of them, sweetheart?—tell to me!"
And she answer'd, "Boshko Yugovich."

— — — — — — — — — —.

V

Now, when the dawn from her red bower
Upclomb the chilly skies, and, all
Athwart the freshening city tower,
The silent light began to fall
About the breezy yellow flower
That shook on the shadowy city wall,
Militsa, through the glimmering streets,
Goes forth against the Eastern gate.
There, all i' the morning light, she meets
The army on to the distant down,
Winding out of the dusky town,
To mantle the field in martial state,
And trample the dew-drop out of the grass.
O brothers, a goodly sight it was!
With curtle axe, in complete steel,
So many a warrior, lusty and leal,
So many a spearman, stout and true,
Marching to battle in order due.
And foremost among that stately throng,
With, over his helmet's golden boss,
Floating plumes of the purple rich,
The gallant Boshko Yugovich
Bearing the standard of the Cross.
All blazing gold his corselet beam'd,
Imperial purple fold on fold,
The mighty Christian ensign stream'd
Over his red-roan courser bold;
And high upon the standard top
Against the merry morning gleam'd
An apple wrought of purest gold;
Thereon the great gold cross, from which,
All glittering downward, drop by drop,

Great golden acorns, lightly hung,
Over his shining shoulder flung
Flashes of light o'er Yugovich.

She caught the bridle ring: in check
The red-roan courser paw'd the ground.
About her brother's bended neck
Her milk-white arm she softly wound,
And half in hope, and half in fear,
She whispered in the young man's ear:—
"Brother, my liege and thine, the king,
Commits me to thy comforting.
He greets thee fair, and bids me say
(The which with all my heart I pray)
That thou the royal ensign yield
To whomsoever thou deemest best,
And turn about from the battle field
At Krouchevach with me to rest,
That of nine brothers I may have one
To swear by when the rest be gone."
But "Foul befall," the young man said,
"The man that turns his horse's head,
Whoe'er he be, from battle plain:
Turn thee, sister, turn again
To thy white tower! I will not yield
The Holy Cross 'tis mine to bear,
Nor turn about from the battle field.
Not, though the king should give, I swear,
The whole of Krouchevach to me,
Would I turn thitherwards with thee.
To-day will be the noblest day
Yon sun in heaven did ever see;
Nor shall my own true comrades say
This day, in sorrow or scorn, of me,
—'The craven heart that dared not go
To the great fight at Kossovo;
That fear'd to find a saintly death,
Nor pour'd his blood for Holy Rood,
Nor fell for the Christian faith.'"
He prickt his horse toward the gate,
And, thro' a cloud of hoary mist
Glittering like one great amethyst,
Swept forth into the morning wan.
Then up there rides in royal state,
With his eight sons, old Yug Bogdan.

She stopt them one by one; she took
The bridle rein; she spoke to them all.
Not one of them all would turn and look:
Not one of them all would listen and wait;
But the trumpet sounded in the gate,
And they follow'd the trumpet call.

VI

All when the misty morn was low,
And the rain was raining heavily
Two ravens came from Kossovo,
Flying along a lurid sky:
One after one, they perched upon
The palace of the great Lazar,
And sat upon the turret wall.
One 'gan croak, and one 'gan call,
"In God's great name, Militsa, dame,
From Kossovo at dawn we came.
A bloody battle we espied:
We saw the two great armies there,
They have met, and ill they fare.
Fallen, fallen, fallen are
The Turkish and the Christian Tsar.
Of the Turks is nothing left;
Of the Serbs a remnant rests,
Hackt and hewn, carved and cleft,
Broken shields, and bloody breasts."
And lo! while yet the ravens spoke,
Up came the servant Milutin:
And he held his right hand, cleft
By a ghastly sabre stroke,
Bruis'd and bloody, in his left;
Gasht with gashes seventeen
Yawn'd his body where he stood,
And his horse was dripping blood.

"O sorrow, sorrow, bitter woe
And sorrow, Milutin!" she said:
"For now I know my lord is dead.
For, were he living, well I know,
Thou hadst not left at Kossovo
Thy lord forsaken to the foe.

O tell me, tell me, Milutin,
Where fell the glorious Prince Lazar?
Where are fallen my brothers nine?
Where my father, Yug Bogdan?
Where Milosh, where Vuk Brankovich?
And where Strakhinya Banovich?"

"They will never return again,
Never return! ye shall see them no more;
Nor ever meet them within the door,
Nor hold their hands. Their hands are cold,
Their bodies bleach in bloody mould.
They are slain! all are slain!
And the maidens shall mourn, and the mothers deplore,
Heaps of dead heroes on battle plain.
Where they fell, there they remain,
Corpses stiff in their gore.
But their glory shall never grow old.
Fallen, fallen, in mighty war,
Fallen, fighting about the Tsar,
Fallen, where fell our lord Lazar!
Never more be there voice of cheer!
Never more be there song or dance!
Muffled be moon and star!
For broken now is the lance,
Shiver'd both shield and spear,
And shatter'd the scimitar.
And cleft is the golden crown,
And the sun of Serbia is down,
O'erthrown, o'erthrown, o'erthrown,
The roof and top of our renown,
Dead is the great Lazar!

"Have ye seen when the howling storm-wind takes
The topmost pine on a hoary rock,
Tugs at it, and tears, and shakes, and breaks,
And tumbles it into the ocean?
So when this bloody day began,—
In the roaring battle's opening shock,
Down went the gray-hair'd Yug Bogdan.
And following him, the noblest man
That ever wore the silver crown
Of age, grown gray in old renown,
One after one, and side by side
Fighting, thy nine brothers died:

Each by other, brother by brother
Following, till death took them all.
But of these nine the last to fall
Was Boshko. Him, myself, I saw,
Three awful hours—a sight of awe,
Here, and there, and everywhere,
And all at once, made manifest,
Like a wide meteor in a troubled air,
Whose motion never may be guess'd.
For over all the lurid rack
Of smoking battle, blazed and burn'd,
And stream'd and flasht,
Like flame before the wind upturn'd
The great imperial ensign splasht
With blood of Turks: where'er he dasht
Amongst their bruised battalions, I
Saw them before him reel and fly:
As when a falcon from on high,
Pounce on a settle-down of doves,
That murmurs make in myrrhy groves,
Comes flying all across the sky,
And scatters them with instant fright;
So flew the Turks to left and right,
Broken before him. Milosh fell,
Pursued by myriads down the dell,
Upon Sitnitsa's rushy brink,
Whose chilly waves will roll, I think,
So long as time itself doth roll,
Red with remorse that they roll o'er him.
Christ have mercy on his soul,
And blessèd be the womb that bore him.
Not alone he fell. Before him
Twelve thousand Turkish soldiers fell,
Slaughter'd in the savage dell.
His right hand was wet and red
With the blood that he had shed,
And in that red right hand he had
(Shorn from the shoulder sharp) the head
Of the Turkish Tsar, Murad.

"There resteth to Serbia a glory,
A glory that shall not grow old;
There remaineth to Serbia a story,
A tale to be chanted and told!
They are gone to their graves grim and gory,

The beautiful, brave, and bold;
But out of the darkness and desolation,
Of the mourning heart of a widow'd nation,
Their memory waketh an exultation!
Yea, so long as a babe shall be born,
Or there resteth a man in the land—
So long as a blade of corn
Shall be reapt by a human hand—
So long as the grass shall grow
On the mighty plain of Kossovo—
So long, so long, even so,
Shall the glory of those remain
Who this day in battle were slain.

"And as for what ye inquire
Of Vuk—when the worm and mole
Are at work on his bones, may his soul
Eternally singe in hell-fire!
Curst be the womb that bore him!
Curst be his father before him!
Curst be the race and the name of him!
And foul as his sin be the fame of him!
For blacker traitor never drew sword—
False to his faith, to his land, to his lord!
And doubt ye, doubt ye, the tale I tell?
Ask of the dead, for the dead know well;
Let them answer ye, each from his mouldy bed,
For there is no falsehood among the dead:
And there be twelve thousand dead men know,
Who betray'd the Tsar at Kossovo."

This is one of many versions. Some were long, some were short, told from various vantage-points and with different central characters and emphases; but they were all tremendously dramatic, all to the same effect—turning weakness, confusion and defeat into glory; condemning treason; lifting bravery and sacrifice into the highest ideals.

They swept the Slavic Balkans; only the Turk had no idea of it. Fifteenth-century Dalmatian records tell that a Serbian *guslar* came to the city of Split, then under Venice, and sang of Kossovo; and the subsequent Dalmatian literature, especially that of Dubrovnik, was clearly influenced by the epic.

Thus began the Cult of Kossovo, the Cult of Heroism, which by the middle of the eighteenth century displaced most aspects of

religion in Serbian life without coming into conflict with the old Orthodox faith. Thenceforth there was only one standard: was a man brave and ready to die or, what was even more difficult, live in the struggle for liberty? If he was, he was a *yunak*, a hero, and the word was added to his name. People referred to him as Yunak So-and-so and greeted him: "How are you, Yunaché?" Indeed, to my personal knowledge, this was still part of good manners in sections of Serbia and Montenegro as late as 1932.

While creating the epic of Kossovo, the mind of the oppressed people of Serbia went back beyond that blood-soaked field—to the first Nemanya and his sainted son Sava, to Dushan the Mighty, to King Vukashin of Macedonia. . . . By the way, let's see, whatever became of Vukashin's son Kralyevich Marko? Well, after the fall of Macedonia the Turks made him a vassal. Did he have to fight on the side of the Turks? Probably; what else could a vassal have done? But he didn't turn Turkish! Not on your life! . . . So the people conjectured and answered, becoming Poet. The bards took conjecture and answer and built them up into drama, until Marko was the most terrific character imaginable, a Hercules, a flock of Paul Bunyans, Rolands and Robin Hoods rolled into a man big as a mountain who lived for hundreds of years. He was always in tremendous difficulties, enormously torn by the conflicts inside him, never having things his own way, but he was always a yunak.

Marko as he appears in the pyesmé is worth studying. The central figure in the Cult of Serbian Heroism, he is a glorified self-portrait of the Serbian people as they were and/or wanted to be while under Turkish rule. But in him they also frankly depicted all their faults as well as the virtues to which they aspired. Through him, they analyzed themselves—but they never had time to let the analysis sink in.

According to the saga, Marko was obliged to serve the Turks, but he was never with them or for them. Nor was he afraid of them, not even of the Sultan. The Turks had his country and his body, but not his soul. That was unconquerable. The Turks required him to fight the Christians; and he had a dreadful time within himself about it, praying when going into battle: "O God, do Thou this day destroy all those who fight against Christendom, and foremost Marko!"

His mother, weary of washing bloody shirts, often begged Marko to give up the sword and devote himself to agriculture. Finally he promised he would. But when he went out to plow he found the Sultan's highway going right through his field. So he started to plow up the highway first of all (sabotage), and when a Turkish caravan

escorted by a band of soldiers came by on fierce horses and ordered him to stop, Marko said quietly, "Don't bother me, I'm working." There was an argument. Marko lost his temper and swung the plow at the Turks, killing all of them. He took their gold and came home: "Here Mother dear, see what today I've plowed thee!" The idea was that peaceful farmers under Turkish rule had to be warriors too—warriors first of all.

An Albanian Turk named Musa Arbanusa, widely dreaded as a swordsman, was one of Marko's principal antagonists. They avoided each other for a long time; then Marko decided to tackle him. He ordered a new sword from the most famous swordmaker in the Ottoman Empire. When it was finished, Marko tried it out by bringing it down on the anvil with all his might. He split the anvil without denting the blade. He was pleased, but he asked the blacksmith if he had ever forged a better sword for anyone else. The blacksmith said yes, Musa's sword cut through the anvil and right down through its foundation to the earth beneath. Marko grimaced and started to pay for the sword, but as the blacksmith put out his hand to take the ducats he cut off his arm. Then he left him a big purse so he could live in comfort for the rest of his life. The ballad justifies Marko on the ground that the swordmaker should not have discriminated among his customers. It apparently did not occur to the bard and his multitudinous collaborators that Musa may have had a stronger right arm than Marko. . . . At last Musa and Marko met and fought a terrific two-day duel without stopping. They broke all their swords and lances and wore out their *buzdované* (iron cudgels). Finally they resorted to wrestling. Musa got Marko down on his back. Marko cried out to his *vila* (nymph or fairy: a combination of guardian angel and dream girl dating back to the Old-Slavs' pagan religion) and she at once answered from the clouds. Her beautiful voice startled Musa and he lifted his head to see where it came from. This gave Marko a chance to pull a knife and rip Musa's belly. After he had rested awhile he examined Musa Arbanusa's innards and found three hearts. On the third one which had not yet started to beat a viper had slept. "If I had awakened before you killed him," said the viper, "he would have torn you apart with no trouble at all." At this, realizing that he had killed a stronger man than he was, Marko burst into tears.

Marko was full of he-man morality of this sort. And he tried to be a just man. The basis of his judgment was "*pravda boga Velikoga*—the justice of God Almighty." Whenever opportunity offered he

defended Christians against the Turks. He freed Serbian girls from Turkish harems. He never went to Church, he did not follow the custom of building or endowing a monastery where monks would pray for his soul and keep his bones; but he was religious in his own way.

In the ballad, his mother Yevrosima speaks to him to this effect: "O Marko my son, my only one, speak not ever falsely. 'Tis better for thee to lose thy head than to blemish thy soul." He carried the burden of Serbian morality without which the nation could not have survived.

For hundreds of years Marko roved about the Balkans. Then things began to bore him. He was completely disgusted when he saw his first pistol. He didn't believe it could do what people said it would; so he put it to his palm and pulled the trigger and sure enough the bullet tore a hole right through his hand. This was too much. What was the world coming to? Why, with this tricky bauble the puniest coward could kill the greatest hero.

His horse Sharats who had been with him half his life, with whom he had conversed and shared his wine, was his last love. . . . Now everything seemed wrong and[8] ——

At the dawn of day the noble Marko
Rode in sunlight on the Sabbath morning;
By the sea, along the Urvinian mountain,
Towards the mountain-top as he ascended;
Suddenly his trusty Sharats stumbled;
Sharats stumbled, and began to weep there.
Sad it fell upon the heart of Marko,
And he thus address'd his favourite Sharats—
"Ah! my faithful friend, my trusty Sharats,
We have dwelt a hundred years and sixty,
Dwelt together as beloved companions,
And till now have never, never stumbled.
Thou hast stumbled now, my trusty Sharats,
Thou hast stumbled, and thine eyes are weeping.
God alone can tell what fate awaits me;—
One of us is surely doom'd to perish,
And my life or thine is now in peril."

While the prince apostrophized his Sharats,
Lo! the Vila from Urvina's mountain
Call'd aloud unto the princely Marko:
"Brother, listen—listen, princely Marko!

Know'st thou why thy faithful Sharats stumbled?
Know that he was mourning for his master;
Know that ye ere long must be divided."
Marko answer'd thus the mountain Vila:
"Thou white Vila, let a curse be on thee!
Now shall I be parted from my Sharats,
Who through many a land and town hath borne me,
From the sun's uprising to his setting?
Better steed ne'er trod the earth than Sharats,
As than Marko never better hero.
While my head stays firmly on my shoulders,
Never will I from my steed be sever'd."
The white Vila answer'd princely Marko:
"Brother, listen!—listen, princely Marko!
Force will never tear thy Sharats from thee;
Vainly 'gainst thee would the arm of hero
Be uplifted—not the shining sabre,
Not the battle-club—nor lance or warrior.
Earth no hero holds who can alarm thee;—
But the brave must die—and thou art mortal;
God will smite thee—God, the old blood-shedder.
But if thou would'st doubt the mountain Vila,
Hasten to the summit of the mountain,
Look to right and look to left around thee:
Thou wilt see two tall and slender fir-trees,
Fir-trees towering o'er the mountain forests;
They with verdant leaves are cover'd over;
And between the fir-trees is a fountain.
Look! and afterwards rein back thy Sharats,
Then alight, and bind him to the fir-tree:
Bend thee down,—and look into the fountain;
Look—as if the fountain were a mirror;
Look, and thou shalt see when death awaits thee."

Marko did, as counsell'd by the Vila.
When he came upon the mountain summit,
To the right and left he look'd around him;
Then he saw two tall and slender fir-trees,
Fir-trees towering high above the forest,
Covered all with verdant leaves and branches.
Then he rein'd his faithful Sharats backwards,
Then dismounted—tied him to the fir-tree;
Bent him down, and looked into the fountain,
Saw his face upon the water mirror'd,
Saw his death-day written on the water.

Tears rush'd down the visage of the hero:
"O thou faithless world!—thou lovely flow'ret!
Thou wert lovely—a short pilgrim's journey—
Short—though I have seen three centuries over—
And 'tis time that I should end my journey!"

Then he drew his sharp and shining sabre,
Drew it forth—and loosed the sabre-girdle;
And he hasten'd to his faithful Sharats:
With one stroke he cleft his head asunder,
That he never should by Turk be mounted,
Never be disgraced in Turkish service,
Water draw, or drag a Moslem's Jugum.
Soon as he had cleaved his head asunder,
Graved a grave he for his faithful Sharats,
Nobler grave than that which held his brother.
Then he broke in four his trusty sabre,
That it might not be a Moslem's portion,
That it might not be a Moslem's triumph,
That it might not be a wreck of Marko,
Which the curse of Christendom should follow.
Soon as he in four had broke his sabre,
Next he broke his trusty lance in seven;
Threw the fragments to the fir-trees' branches.
Then he took his club, so terror-striking,
In his strong right hand, and swiftly flung it,
Flung it from the mountain of Urvina,
Far into the azure, gloomy ocean.
To his club thus spake the hero Marko:
"When my club returneth from the ocean,
Shall a hero come to equal Marko."

When he thus had scatter'd all his weapons,
From his breast he drew a golden tablet;
From his pocket drew unwritten paper,
And the princely Marko thus inscribed it:
"He who visits the Urvina mountain,
He who seeks the fountain 'neath the fir-trees,
And there finds the hero Marko's body,
Let him know that Marko is departed.
Where he died, he had three well-fill'd purses;—
How well fill'd?—well fill'd with golden ducats.
One shall be his portion, and my blessing,
Who shall dig a grave for Marko's body;
Let the second be the church's portion;

Let the third be given to blind and maim'd ones,
That the blind through earth in peace may wander,
And with hymns laud Marko's deeds of glory."

And when Marko had inscribed the letter,
Lo! he stuck it on the fir-tree's branches,
That it might be seen by passing travellers.
In the fount he threw his golden tablet,
Doff'd his vest of green, and spread it calmly
On the grass, beneath a sheltering fir-tree;
Cross'd him, and lay down upon his garment;
O'er his eyes he drew his samur-kalpak,
Laid him down,—yes! laid him down for ever.

By the fountain lay the clay-cold Marko
Day and night;—a long, long week he lay there.
Many travellers pass'd, and saw the hero,—
Saw him lying by the public path-way;
And while passing, said, "The hero slumbers!"
Then they kept a more than common distance,
Fearing that they might disturb the hero.

Fortune is the leader of misfortune,
As misfortune oft is fortune's leader:
'T was a happy fortune, then, that Vaso,
He the Iguman of the Holy Mountain,
From the white church bound of Vilindari,
With his scholar, with the young Isaiah,
Thither came and saw the sleeping Marko.
His right hand then beckon'd to his scholar:
"O, my son, be cautious, lest thou wake him!
When disturb'd he rages full of fury,
And without remorse he might destroy us."
Then he looked in anxious terror round him,
Saw the letter on the fir-tree branches;
Read it from a distance;—as he trembled,
Read that Marko had in death departed.
From his horse the astonish'd monk alighted,
Seized the hand of Marko;—Marko moved not!
Long he had been dead,—long since departed!

Tears rush'd swiftly from the eye of Vaso,
Marko's fate fill'd all his thoughts with sorrow.
From the girdle then he took the purses,
Which he hid beneath his own white girdle:

Round and round inquired Iguman Vaso
Where he should entomb the hero Marko;
Round and round he look'd in fond inquiry.
On his horse he flung the hero's body,
Brought it safely to the ocean's borders,
Thence he shipped it for the Holy Mountain;
Near the white church, Vilindari, landed,
To that white church he convey'd the body;
And, as wont, upon the hero's body
Funeral hymns were sung; and he was buried
In the white church aisle, the very center,—
There the old man placed the hero's body.
But no monument he raised above him,
Lest when foes should mark the hero's grave-stone,
Theirs should be the joy, and theirs the triumph.

This is one of many versions of Marko's end. Several others insist that he is not dead; he and Sharats only sleep. They mention three different places in three South-Slavic regions—Old Serbia, Bosnia and Istria (in Italy since 1919)—as the scene of their long slumber. Horse and man will awaken when Marko's battle-club bounces back up from the sea into which he hurled it. In all versions the sea is the Adriatic, "*the* sea" to all South-Slavs.

Since Marko was a Turkish vassal even before Kossovo, it may seem curious that the people should have made him the center of the Cult of Heroism. Either Lazar or Obilich would appear more fitted to be the preeminent hero. Each had died in the struggle for liberty. But Marko came closer to being an embodiment of the complex feelings of their collective subjugation because he did what was even more difficult: he lived in the struggle for human dignity. Clear-cut and single-minded knights, Lazar and Obilich died at Kossovo like trees that snap because they cannot bend before the storm. To make either of them the central hero, would have glorified the finality of defeat, would have denounced the shame of any sort of compromise. The Serbians had to bend in order to survive defeat and the subsequent grinding oppression. So Marko lived on, spanning the imperative subtleties of their position as well as their centuries of misery. They took to their souls the hero who, because he shared their experience, could help them vanquish defeat.

In their daily lives, the people yielded outwardly, resisted inwardly, developing an intricate, paradoxical pattern of thinking and behavior. They had no alternative, no choice. But they gave their crea-

tion, Marko, the illusion of the power to choose. In *his* daily encounters, small and large, he faced the issue each time: should he submit as a vassal, or withstand as a Serbian? Sometimes he did one or the other, sometimes both together. But the important thing was that because he was a yunak, a hero, he was free to choose (up to a point); actually he was not. And the People-Poet never succeeded in carrying the legend to a solution; they finally had to declare a truce, and sink Marko into a sleep from which he would sometime awaken.

However, in projecting Marko, the Serbians regained some power of choice; they re-lived the challenge over and over again, not letting it sleep, girding themselves for the time when they themselves could face the issue and answer with one full-throated voice.

When early in the eighteenth century the Kossovo and Kralyevich Marko sagas finally came to the attention of Western Europe, they excited only the writers. Jacob Grimm said that "since the days of Homer . . . in the whole of Europe there was not a single phenomenon which would make us understand the essence, as well as the genesis, of epics to such an extent as they do." Goethe learned Serbian in order to read and hear them in the original, and in conversation compared them to the Song of Songs and discussed them more fully in *Kunst und Altertum.* Others they reminded of Persian heroic poetry, of the *Chanson de Roland* and *Word of the Fight of the Prince Igor.* Treatises about them appeared all over the Continent.

But when a wave of anti-Slavism began to rise in Europe, especially after 1848, other German, Austrian and British writers dug into the moral content of the epics and came up with conclusions unfavorable to the Serbians. Pseudo-savants pointed to the report of Bayazed, son of Murad, on the Sultan's unhistoric assassination by Milosh Obilich: ". . . . The battle being ended, [my father] returned unhurt and in full health from the battlefield to his tent, which was elevated toward the heavens. And while we enjoyed the greatest pleasure in seeing how the cut heads of the Christian dukes rolled under the horses' hoofs . . . there suddenly appeared a warrior Milosh Obilich by name. He came perfidiously, saying that he accepted Islam. . . . [Then] he drew a poisonous hanjar hidden in his sleeve, and boldly thrust it into the body of the Sultan, sorely wounding him. . . . After his deed Milosh tried to escape through the soldiers who shone like stars in the sky, but was caught by them

and cut to pieces." This proved that the Serbians were a barbarous nation.

No one saw the Kossovo and Marko epics for what they really were—the heart of the Cult of Heroism; a spiritual bootstrap; and the core of a new unique political effort, an effort at mass statesmanship—although perhaps some of the anti-Slavic writers dimly felt what it was and, fearing it, tried to discredit it.

Decade after decade Serbians made the pyesmé. Each generation felt the agony anew and the ballad-making went on, coalescing out of the people's unending absorption with hope.

But this long process also made them. Poetry became the People. It made them *yunatsi,* heroes; in the middle of the eighteenth century Serbians began to strike at the degenerating Turks. They left their villages and went into the mountains to prey on Turkish trade and military detachments. These guerrillas were called *haiduks.* The Turks regarded them as bandits; to the people they were saviors.

"There remaineth to Serbia a story," which, however, was "chanted and told" not only there, but along the Bloody Frontier in Croatia where it inspired the *uskotsi,* Serbian refugees in Austrian service. Thence it drifted farther into Croatia, where many people could not resist its appeal. Other South-Slavs than the Serbians began to see that in a way Kossovo had been their battle too. Slowly they too accepted separate ballads or the various cycles of the pyesmé as their background . . . their bootstrap.

The Cult of Kossovo began to take hold outside of conquered Serbdom.

Serbia Is Liberated, But---

In the middle of the eighteenth century, the loosening Ottoman hold on the Balkans offered opportunities to the most resourceful Serbian peasants to become *gazdé*—"big shots"—in their communities by bribing the local Turks and accumulating property.

As lawlessness increased, however, Turks took to plundering the gazdé's lands. Legal redress was impossible; so one by one the wealthy Serbians turned haiduks and with their *momtsi*, bodyguards or mercenaries, aided by large numbers of volunteer peasants, carried out attacks against the Turks. The gazdé were illiterate men, but shrewd and proud; at the time, the clearest if a somewhat devious result of the Cult of Kossovo. Like Robin Hood, they distributed loot among the hard-pressed villages. Their purpose was political rather than humanitarian: to induce the occasionally hesitating peasant to join up with them as guerrillas. In places where this method of recruiting failed, they used others. Turkish patrols would suddenly come upon a Moslem corpse on the outskirts of a village—planted there by the haiduks—and in retaliation would raze the community, leaving the peasants no choice but to flee into the mountains. But this was not often necessary. The Serbian people wanted to fight and to cast off the Turkish yoke.

Using their Church connections, the haiduk chiefs got in touch with Russian pan-Slavists and the Imperial Household in St. Petersburg. They also sought aid from Austria and France. But only Russia responded; not so much because the Tsar wanted to save the Balkan Christians from Turkish brutality as because Russia's interests clashed with Turkey's and pro-Turkish Britain's.

Soon the haiduk bands combined into a sizable army and their chiefs elected one of themselves, George Petrovich, commander-in-chief. A powerful, picturesque man with a swart face illumined by flashing black eyes, he was popularly known as Kara-George, *kara* meaning "black" in Turkish. Like all his higher-up lieutenants, he

was a rich man. He wore a costume embroidered with gold. His sword-hilt and pistol-butts were encrusted with jewels.

In 1804 with a loosely organized army of desperate, vigorous peasants armed with primitive guns, knives and a few cannon from Russia, Kara-George conducted successful operations against local garrisons of the Sultan. Each peasant outfit had one or two guslars who sang the Kossovo and Kraylevich Marko ballads. For almost a decade these outfits—much in the manner of the Partisans of 1941-'43—fought under Kara-George with incredible bravery and liberated sections of Serbia, while the rising Turkish terror in the still-occupied regions drove more and more peasants to join their ranks.

Pulling at their spiritual bootstrap, the Serbians were the first to rise against the oppressor—before the Greeks, long before the Bulgarians and Rumanians. They received very little outside help, but even that meant a lot.

In 1813, after Napoleon's invasion of Russia and her subsequent pact with Turkey, aid from her to Kara-George ceased. His liberation effort collapsed. Turks reoccupied the freed regions and slaughtered the populations of many villages. Kara-George fled to Austria, then went to Russia to try to gain support for his next attempt.

In 1815, however, a second uprising broke out under another leader—Milosh Obrenovich, a wealthy former tax-collector of the Sultan, as brave as Kara-George, but crafty, selfish and ambitious. After Kara-George returned to Serbia, Milosh had him murdered; then he sent his head to the Sultan in token of appeasement. Russia helped him obtain for Serbia a semi-autonomous status and he received British help in buying for himself the title of hereditary prince; Lord Palmerston's government wanted him to become the dictator of Serbia. Turkish garrisons remained in Belgrade and scores of other towns till the middle 1860s, but the country's administrative apparatus passed into Serbian hands.

As the leader of the first liberation war, Kara-George laid the basis for the claim of his descendants that they—not the Obrenoviches —were the rightful rulers of Serbia. The dynastic rivalry between these two families, working in conjunction with other problems and forces, complicated Serbia's career during the greater part of the following century.

The first post-Kossovo Serbian state was ruled by an oligarchy of rich peasants headed by Prince Milosh. They strove for money and prestige: power. Their definition of freedom was to do as *they* liked.

An autocrat, Milosh Obrenovich had no understanding of democracy or constitutional government. When a draft of the first Serbian constitution was read to him, he said it was fine, then told his scribe to add this final clause: "*U ostalom sve ché biti onako kako gospodar odluchi.*—As for the rest, everything shall be as the boss decides."

Serbia was a peasant country. Except for a few priests, it had no intelligentsia. There was no industry, no industrial population. No civil service, no schools, no books. As I say, the oligarchs themselves were illiterate peasants.

The urban population was predominantly non-Serbian: Jews (who had fled from Spain in the fifteenth century), Greeks, Armenians, and left-overs of the Tsintsari whose name has come to be a term of contempt. "Tsintsari" takes in all non-Serbians and part-Serbians to whom the general population objects on the grounds that they are not integrated and identified with it, but cooperate against it with anybody who happens to be in power. Some of the financiers and merchants among these groups exploited the villagers. They formed the so-called Charshiya—an abstract term for which there is no exact English translation. Its meaning includes the marketplace, usury, and business in general. It touches emotional chords in the average Serbian similar to those touched by the unfavorable connotations of "Wall Street" in America or "the Bourse" in some European countries.

Primitive though it was, the new Serbian state opened the doors of education to the children of the few well-to-do peasants. Until then the center of Serbian culture was the Austrian region inhabited by *Prechanski Serbi*—Serbians who had "gone across the river" during the Turkish occupation. Many of them now returned to the liberated homeland and helped to establish schools. By-and-by a university opened in Belgrade. Also, young people started going abroad to the Universities of Vienna, Prague, Paris, Zurich and Heidelberg to study engineering, architecture, law and political science. These students were almost exclusively children of village gazdé and beneficiaries of the urban Charshiya.

Most of the early gazdé never lost touch with the people. It was different with their sons who were educated abroad. In many instances, contact with the West estranged them from the peasantry. They acquired big ideas, turned also against their oligarchical fathers, and on top of the primitive patriarchal social structure of Serbia they decided to build a modern European state. That could not be

done without first destroying the anarchical power of the peasant oligarchy and establishing police power in its place.

In 1848 Milosh Obrenovich, the chief oligarch, was overthrown and exiled. But the oligarchs were not through yet; a group of them installed Alexander Karageorgevich, a son of the First Liberator. At this point all the enemies of the Obrenoviches became pro-Karageorgevich, and the other way about. The ensuing dynastic changes, with all their crazy trimmings, were due to conflicting economic interests, ancient feuds, personal hatreds and concepts of honor and patriotism; any intrinsic loyalty to one "princely" family or the other was secondary.

Alexander was a weakling and he was kicked out. Milosh Obrenovich returned from exile and died soon after. His last act was to build a church over the grave of Kara-George whom he had murdered.

His son, Michael, a man of education and of immense wealth, had been brought up as a prince. He had associated with the aristocracy of Central Europe and married a Hungarian noblewoman. He looked upon his subjects as *stoka bez repa,* cattle without tails.

From the aristocratic angle, the epithet was not inaccurate. Rural districts were stagnant. The overwhelming majority of peasants still lived in poverty and filth. The institution of *seoski koshevi,* village baskets, still existed. In these communal "baskets"—a primitive version of Henry Wallace's ever-normal granary—peasants stored part of their produce in good years to be used in seasons when crops failed.

In contrast, the towns had steadily grown. The fully corrupt Charshiya had prospered, was now more powerful than the semi-patriotic village oligarchs, and it demanded peace and order under the protection of the state. And Michael built a "perfect" state—a police state.

One thing must be said for Michael: he did not use his power to enrich himself. He was rich enough. His aristocratic Hungarian wife began to get on his nerves and he divorced her, determined to marry his cousin Anka Konstantinovich, whom he loved. The Church opposed the marriage, but he overruled the opposition; then happy matrimony and middle age contrived to make him a Serbian again. He found that he respected the hard-working peasant who was waiting for the national state to do something for the village, and he was almost ready to grant the people a constitution when he was killed—nobody knows why. It was one of those irrelevant assassinations in

history. The murderers, men of no consequence, were caught and shot.

Michael was succeeded by his nephew Milan Obrenovich, son of a dissolute Rumanian woman. He was a minor in a Paris school when the commander of the Belgrade garrison—one Blaznavats, who boasted of being an illegitimate son of Milosh—proclaimed him prince under a Regency. One of the regents, Yovan Ristich, was a man of courage, administrative ability and patriotism and intelligence. He took charge of the civil government and foreign affairs, Blaznavats of the army.

When all this happened—in the late '60s—the new Serbian state was fifty-odd years old. The last of the Turkish garrisons had just left. The village remained essentially as it had been under the Turks, while Belgrade, the "White City" at the confluence of two navigable rivers, the Danube and the Sava, boomed as a center of commerce, finance and bureaucracy. There was the Court, the diplomatic corps. There were new palaces, hotels and cafés. Belgrade had become "civilized."

Grumbling to himself, the peasant blamed his ills on the city and town. But the towns were few and far apart and for the most part distant from him. He was obliged to remain economically self-sufficient. He made his own clothes from the wool off his sheep, his own shoes from home-tanned hide, his own wooden plows and other tools. To buy a needle or a pound of salt, he had to cross mountains and rivers.

Village stores were prohibited by law—they would weaken "the growth and prosperity of the town population," really the Charshiya. But in 1870 Regent Ristich managed to replace this law with another permitting stores in villages "not nearer than four hours' traveling to a town."

This radicalism upset the Charshiya, which promptly propagandized against it: The village store was an "immoral influence." It spread "luxury" among the simple peasants, destroying their ancient modesty. Worst of all, it violated old and tried urban business methods. It did not sell for money. It bartered its goods for the peasant's corn, wheat and poultry; then it sent the produce to the city.

But the peasant liked the village store. He felt he had finally got something away from the town; that he was more independent of it. And he craved independence—*svoboda*, liberty, was the most exciting word in his vocabulary. He was a rebel, a natural democrat, practic-

ing democracy in his personal and communal relations, waiting——

Of course the Belgrade rule was better than the former Turkish terror-regime, but that was pretty nearly all that could be said for it so far as the peasant was concerned. However, he tried to be patient. The Serbian *gospoda*—urban upper class, ruling group—had little use for him except as something to sit or step on, but there might be a chance for him somewhere in the future. What were a few years or decades after Serbia had waited over four centuries to cast out the Turk? Everything took time. Even the Omnipotent God had required six days to create the world; then He had to rest after doing a job that He Himself was soon so displeased with that He flooded it to have another try. . . .

Meantime, the Serbian peasant had the Church of his St. Sava, most of whose priests were still his priests, men of the village, sons of the people. By now he definitely was not religious in any strict sense; he often doubted the existence of a personal God, as did openly his priest; but the church, the white building in the middle of his community, was something in which he deeply believed. It was the only national institution that was really his. He said: "*Idem do tserkvé*—I'm going to the church," meaning the building. Not "to church," which means to pray inside it. Off and on he did go inside, but much of his time he spent in front of the church, talking things over, hearing what the priest who read the papers had to say. One of the things he heard of was the French Revolution.

Like the Croatian peasant, he worked hard; he reproduced, kept the country and the nation going . . . and he did a lot of mulling, slow and deep. Beneath the stagnant aspect of the village there was a quiet ferment about social and human rights. There were hesitant impulses to struggle for the extension of the village democracy to the country as a whole.

Serbia then had two political parties—the "Liberal" and the "Progressive," both purely city movements and both mis-named.

The "Liberal" Party, organized around 1850 by the first generation of educated Serbians and headed by Yovan Ristich, stood for gradual development of parliamentary institutions under the sponsorship of the conservative or propertied classes. It opposed universal suffrage and local self-government. It believed in the supremacy of the executive over the legislative branch of the government, for the masses had first to be taught to appreciate democracy. In foreign policy the

"Liberals" were anti-Austrian and pro-Russian. Ristich insisted that without the support of Russia Serbia could not remain free.

The "Progressive" Party was an appendage to the Court. It appeared about the same time as the "Liberal" Party, during Prince Michael's "aristocratic period." Having no faith in the people, it was instrumental in building up the administrative-police apparatus of the state. During the rule of the last two Obrenoviches its leaders helped frustrate the sporadic attempts to provide the country with a constitution.

In '69, the Regency and the "Liberal" Party, which came into power with it, gave Serbia a constitution. It was a conservative document, but it suggested the possibility of an orderly political development. The rights of the citizens were explicitly stated and the power of the State was circumscribed. The trouble was that this first Serbian constitution had not been obtained by the people. It was *given* to them by the Regency or, more correctly, by Ristich and the intelligentsia of the "Liberal" Party.

The peasant masses were taking no active part in politics. They brooded. They looked upon the state, whose seat was in the hated city, as inimical to their interests. Unlike most other East-European peasant countries, Serbia never produced an agrarian party or movement. It could not do so because, instead of trying to work out an indigenous solution, its potential leaders returned from Vienna or Paris determined to apply to primitive peasant Serbia the economic and political principles of the West.

The country's first radical leaders were Socialists, although there was not a single factory in the whole of Serbia except the state arsenal at Kraguyevats. The Socialists came along late in the nineteenth century and founded the Radical Party which, contrary to all socialist principles, began to attack the centralized State.

One of the leading figures in the group was Svetozar Markovich. Like all of his close collaborators, he had studied in Switzerland and received his political education from the writings of German and Russian Socialists and other internationalists. Already in the '70s he joined Kristo Botev and other Bulgarian Socialists and progressives in preaching the unity of the Balkan peoples. Had he not died young, the history of the Radical Party might have been different. It might have developed into a real people's movement.

The party was formally organized in '81. Among its organizers two men stand out: Pera Todorovich and Nikola Pashich.

Todorovich was the son of a rich gazda. He was a compelling

speaker, an effective writer, a born organizer. He financed, edited and wrote for *Samouprava* (Self-Government), the party's official organ. With his whole heart and soul, not to mention his father's ducats, he threw himself into the work of forming what he thought would be the party of the Serbian masses. Under his leadership the first red flag was raised in Serbia at a Radical meeting in Kraguyevats. The incident created a stir in the still Serbian masses analogous to the result of throwing a stone into a quiet pool. His purpose was to turn the peasants actively against their exploiters. He denounced those of the bishops and priests who had begun to move away from the people . . . and the people made a song without a title which historians labeled "The Peasant Marseillaise:"

Protiv Boga i vladara,
Protiv popa i oltara,
Protiv kruné i skiptara,
I trgovca kaishara,
Za radnika, za ratara,
Borimo se mi.
Ustai, seljo, ustai rodé,
Da sé spasesh od gospodé. . . .

Chinovniké, birokraté,
Chiftariyu, zelenashé,
Tsilindrashé i sablyaché,
Koyi gazi pravo nashé,
Gonichemo svi.
Ustai, seljo, ustai rodé,
Da sé spasesh od gospodé.

Literally translated, but minus its rhythm and word flavor:

Against God and the ruler,
Against the priest and his altar,
Against the crown and the scepter,
Against the merchant and the usurer,
And for the worker and the peasant
We are fighting.
Arise, peasants; brothers, to your feet,
Save yourselves from the ruling crowd.

The bureaucrats and clerks,
The money-changers and swindlers,
Those under high hats and the sword-rattlers,
Who are crushing our rights,

All of us will fight.
Arise, peasants; brothers, up and against them,
To save yourselves from the ruling crowd.

This was firebrand Todorovich's influence. But that was as far as he got. He was not a practical politician.

Nikola Pashich, on the other hand, was. He was a wire-puller, negotiator, schemer, procrastinator. Born in Zayechar, near the Bulgarian frontier, he never spoke or wrote Serbian correctly. He concealed his meaning in half-finished sentences and equivocal phrases, in hints and winks. He practiced the patience and duplicity necessary to carry out his ambitions. In Switzerland he had studied architecture. On his return to Serbia, the proud citizenry of his home town gave him the job of building a two-story hospital. Pashich drew the plans for it. When the building was almost up the workers discovered that the blueprints did not provide for stairs. After that Pashich devoted himself to politics and statesmanship.

For forty-six years, this man with the beard of a saint, the veiled eyes of a back-stabber, and the soul of a miser dominated the political life of Serbia and of Yugoslavia. He did that by maintaining the appearance of a man of the people while playing along with the Charshiya. . . .

At the beginning the Radical program was as simple as it was demagogic: against taxes, against state monopolies (tobacco especially), against the focus of power in Belgrade, against the police, against bureaucracy; for local self-government, for Greater Serbia and for "Mother Russia." It immediately elicited a powerful response from the hitherto inert village. But the village was fooled. The Radicals remained a "peasant" party only as long as they had no responsibility for governing the country.

There were moments in this period when the essence of Serbia, the people's deep-down spirit, reduced the chicanery of politicians to relative insignificance. The year '76 was such a moment. All of a sudden Serbia and Montenegro declared war on Turkey "to liberate Kossovo," for the famous field was still under the Ottoman rule, "and to help the rebels in Bosnia and Herzegovina." At that time Serbia had less than a million and a half inhabitants, Montenegro perhaps not a hundred thousand, while Turkey's population was over forty million. Central and Western Europe thought the Serbians were insane. But behind their move was the great compulsion of

the Cult of Kossovo and what they had heard of the French Revolution. They were intensely conscious that they were Serbians; Serbdom was a cult. It was their duty to liberate Kossovo.

As five hundred years before when the Serbians alone stood up against the Turks, there was no one in "civilized" Europe to help them. On June 10, '76, Prince Milan Obrenovich addressed a letter to the Grand Vizier in which he protested against certain schemes of the Porte to destroy Serbia. Eight days later the British consul in Belgrade informed the Serbian foreign minister that Serbia would get no reply. Serbia then declared war on Turkey, and Montenegro joined it; but the two countries got nowhere. Disraeli identified the interests of Britain with the preservation of Turkey. And after the opening battle Russia and Britain intervened and the war petered out.

This caused a twenty-odd-year slump in the Serbian spirit with only a sporadic rise.

Milan Obrenovich, who became king in '78, opposed the Radicals with everything he had. He could not endure any limitation to his power and he never forgave the Regents for the constitution granted to Serbia during his minority. Milan ruled with the help of the army. All higher officers were carefully chosen for their devotion to the Obrenovich dynasty. Milan feared the people. He feared the national militia, which as a matter of course, not of law, included every able-bodied male; and in '83 he ordered the peasants to surrender their guns.

The order produced a widespread revolution which Milan extinguished in blood. The central committee of the Radical party which had incited the uprising was thrown into prison and cowed—all save cunning, foresighted Nikola Pashich who having fled into Bulgaria before the start of the rebellion kept sending revolutionary messages from the safety of refuge, laying the foundation for his subsequent reputation as a "man of the people."

In suppressing the upheaval, Milan Obrenovich acted like a strong man who intended to remain dictator as long as he lived. Actually, he was weak, petty and dissolute. He gambled away the family wealth and divorced his wife Natalia after he fell in love with the wife of one of his secretaries; she was beautiful and a good listener. Artezima could listen for hours to Milan's tales of woe, and had a son by him. Besides, she was the daughter of a wealthy Levantine merchant; and the king needed some money quick.

In '88 Milan was only thirty-five, but his nerves were in frazzles. He knew the people hated him and he feared assassination. He feared everything. He feared for his son Alexander, whom he loved to the point of insanity; and he felt it imperative for the boy's sake to make peace between the Dynasty and the People.

The Radical Party was the People. So Milan gave Serbia a very liberal constitution, appointed a Regency to rule during his son's minority, ordered the army to swear loyalty to the young king, abdicated and went into exile. The head regent was again Yovan Ristich who had no use for the Radicals, into whose hands the new constitution placed the government. It must be pointed out that this constitution too was *given* to the people, and that the first Radical government in Serbia had not been won by the party, but had been presented to it.

Now that they were in power, the Radicals tamed down and changed their color. The first cabinet did not contain a single peasant. With the exception of one businessman, all its members belonged to the urban intelligentsia. Prime Minister Sava Gruyich was a soldier-diplomat. Pashich was not acceptable to the Regency. From the revolution of '83 until '89 he had lived in exile. The only Radical leader whom King Milan had never pardoned, he was a hero in the eyes of the uninformed, illiterate people. The Radical National Assembly elected him speaker. Biding his time, he watched the cabinet frame the new laws.

During the regime of Milan Obrenovich, Serbia had become practically an Austrian province. Under a secret agreement with Vienna, the tiny country obligated itself not to permit on its territory "any political, religious or other movement inimical to Austria-Hungary, including Bosnia, Herzegovina and Novi Pazar." In addition, Serbia was entirely dependent on Austria and Hungary as the sole market for her export products—hogs and cattle—and consequently she was not allowed to impose tariff duties on Austrian manufactured articles.

The Radicals in the new government hated Austria. And in order to free Serbia from her economically, they introduced a system of state subsidies to domestic enterprises. This part of their program, worked out largely by Pashich, was accepted with high enthusiasm by the Belgrade Charshiya, which presently summed up the economics of Serbia in a famous phrase: "*Komé drzhava né plyuné u kesu tay sé neché obogatiti*—He into whose pocketbook the state does not spit will never get rich."

The peasant masses also hated Austria and wanted to break the Austrian economic stranglehold. However, they looked with disfavor upon subsidies and concessions to domestic enterprises. They saw the money of the state pouring into the pockets of the Charshiya. But they had no comprehensive economic program of their own. They only hummed their Marseillaise. They had no leader. They could not prevent the wedding of domestic capitalism and the Radical leadership. "The Radicals had power and the Charshiya had money," says historian Slobodan Yovanovich, "and those two things—power and money—attract one another." The really progressive or radical men in the party were swept aside and replaced by new figures from among the Charshiya. Thus ended the revolutionary era of the party. Only the "Radical" name remained.

During their first government—'89-'92—the Radicals devoted most of their energies to purging the administrative apparatus of their political opponents. They dismissed from the government service all members of the "Liberal" and "Progressive" parties. In the villages Radical mobs beat up and even killed their former bureaucratic masters.

This did not appreciably improve the condition of the villages; only ministers of the government and urban party chiefs were getting rich. But, although disappointed that "their" government did not reduce taxes and eliminate bureaucracy, the peasants remained faithful to the party. They didn't know any better. There was nothing else to join or support. They were still too inexperienced to organize any sort of movement themselves. Pashich was able to fool too many for too long a time. The Radical government felt secure.

But, inexperienced themselves, the Radicals overlooked the fact that Regent Ristich was not powerless. In '92 he threw them out.

At this point ex-King Milan re-entered the picture. In Belgrade he had found heaven in the boudoir of his mistress. In Paris, Artezima faced the competition of experts and she lost. Milan was burdened with debts. His eyes looked homeward to the throne he had abandoned. His son, King Alexander, was still a minor, still under the Regency. The keys to the royal treasury were in the hands of the regents.

In '93 Milan, a few army commanders and the leading Radical politicians engineered a *coup d'état*, overthrew the Regency, and enthroned Alexander in spite of his youth. This was unconstitutional of course, but "the Radicals shouted with joy," says historian Yovanovich. "Without any sacrifices, in the twinkling of an eye, they were

returned to power. They were filled with the mellow feeling of a man who suddenly inherits a great fortune."

But Milan and his military cabal were an ungrateful lot. Eight months later the Radical government was thrown out for the second time, not to return to power until the violent death of the last Obrenovich in 1903.

The political life of Serbia went from bad to worse. With the support of the army and the police, the Crown was all-powerful. Good government jobs and large incomes could be obtained only through royal favor, and politicians, including Pashich, accepted the fact that opposition was futile. They bowed the neck and bent the knee in loyal submission. Milan and his son Alexander could have spent the rest of their lives as absolute rulers of Serbia if the young man had not married Draga Mashin, reputed to be a prostitute, and if his father—who had not yet decided whether he was an aristocrat or a democrat—had not democratized the Military Academy in Belgrade.

Draga Mashin was the widow of a poor railroad clerk. She had lived for a while by selling her personal charms, but had found her free-lance position unsatisfactory. So she wrote a letter to Alexander's mother, Natalia, reminding the exiled queen of the help one of her ancestors had extended to the founder of the dynasty and begging for assistance. The queen took pity on the woman and made her a lady-in-waiting.

On a visit to his mother at Biarritz in '95 Alexander met Draga and lost his heart to her. She became indispensable to him; all the more so since she resisted his youthful advances.

In order to have Draga by his side, Alexander had to bring his mother to Belgrade. The queen refused to return as long as Milan, her husband, stayed in the country. Stubborn and unforgiving, Natalia wanted to humble him at the hands of his son. Alexander ordered him to leave Serbia, Milan obeyed, and the queen and her entourage arrived in April, '95.

Two years later Draga agreed to become the king's mistress. But the mother-queen was now opposed to their happiness. When she refused Alexander's request to leave the country, he ordered the police to escort her across the frontier. Milan returned to Serbia in September, '97.

Alexander installed Draga in a separate palace, where she kept a "court" of her own. Royal favor could be wooed and obtained through

her. His father did not object. He had grown tired of women and gambling but he let the boy have his fling. Milan wanted to work, to do something for his son and Serbia.

He asked Alexander to make him Commander-in-Chief of the Army. And in that position he created the modern army of Serbia, the army which defeated the Turks in 1912 and the Bulgarians in '13 and which covered itself with glory during 1914-'18. At the same time, Milan created the instrument of his son's destruction by taking into the Military Academy sons of ordinary peasants in whom a spirit of loyalty to the dynasty did not exist and could not be developed. These young officers were devoted to Milan as a person, but not to the royal house. And spiritually they were children of Kossovo and Kralyevich Marko.

Alexander was too obsessed with Draga to see that his father aspired to make him a ruler second to none on the Balkan peninsula. To have a grandson of royal blood, it was necessary to find Alexander a wife of well-established royal lineage.

Alexander ostensibly approved of his father's plan to ask for the hand of the German princess, Alexandra of Schaumburg-Lippe. She was poor but she had an excellent pedigree. Milan had no doubt that the Emperors of Austria and Germany, who were actively promoting the marriage, would provide the princess with a suitable dowry. By June, 1900, everything was tentatively arranged. Alexander congratulated his father and suggested he go to Vienna for a rest.

Milan went . . . and a month later he received the news that Alexander had announced his engagement to Draga Mashin.

Alexander was twenty-four and Draga, whose father had died in a lunatic asylum and whose mother was an alcoholic, was thirty-six. The sense of propriety of the Serbian people was outraged. The ladies of Belgrade shuddered at the thought of curtseying to her. Army generals, former members of the government, merchants, and other leading men implored the king to give up this marriage. One man told him to his face that he himself had "had Draga for a sum which was not excessive." Another informed him that Draga was barren.

The king refused to believe it. He had only one fear: his father, who commanded the army and to whom the officers' corps was completely devoted. Had Milan returned to Belgrade, the army would have deposed Alexander and put the old man back on the throne. But Milan loved his son. He stayed abroad. His withdrawal

from Serbian politics was received with joy in Petrograd—Milan was an Austrophile—and the Tsar of Russia accepted Alexander's invitation to be his best man.

Suddenly the whole affair assumed an entirely different aspect. The people interpreted the Tsar's acceptance as a sign that Serbia would cease to be a vassal of Austria. Serbia's extremely precarious position, coupled with the people's overwhelming pro-Russian sentiment, made this turn of events so important that in many a mind it overruled Draga's past. In addition, Milan's numerous enemies gave the marriage their blessing because they knew that it meant the end of the man they feared. Milan died a year later and was buried at the expense of the Austrian Emperor in Srem, on Austrian territory.

After the wedding, Alexander took revenge on the enemies of Draga. The army was purged. Out of six generals four were dismissed. Factionalism, heretofore a feature of political life only, was now introduced into the army. To the Austrian and Russian agents already infesting the country were added the king's spies, and people were punished for whispering "indecencies" about Queen Draga.

The king was furious at the rumors that his wife was incapable of bearing children. His mother was the chief offender in this respect. She wrote postcards to her friends in Belgrade on which she stated for everybody to read what she thought of her daughter-in-law. On one, written to her former major-domo, she said: "I hear the drunkard's daughter is suffering from an unusual disease. . . ." An answer to this postcard was printed in the *Official Gazette* at the personal order of the king, who threatened to try his mother for high treason.

One month after the wedding, Draga informed the King that she was with child. Alexander was overjoyed. The pregnancy was confirmed by a physician imported from Paris and the news was published. The Emperor of Russia consented to be the child's godfather. But nine months later the child was still unborn. Queen-Mother Natalia informed the Tsar that he was open to the indignity of serving as godfather to a child neither sired by King Alexander nor brought into the world by Draga. It is probable that Draga's plot would not have been discovered had her sister not miscarried. The Emperor sent his own physician to examine the queen. He ascertained not only that she was not pregnant, but also that she was sterile.

All of Europe roared with laughter and ridiculed the court and the people of Serbia. The European press characterized Queen Draga as

a prostitute without shame or conscience and King Alexander as a moron.

But Alexander went right on loving Draga. He hoped to rehabilitate himself and his wife in the eyes of the world by visiting the Emperor of Russia and he tried his best to obtain an invitation. He was ready to do anything for Russia if only the Tsarina would hold out her hand to his wife. By that act, he thought, the Tsarina would obliterate Draga's past and raise her to a pedestal fit for a queen. The Tsar was willing because he did not want to throw the King of Serbia back into the arms of Austria, but the Tsarina was not.

Alexander then appealed to the Emperor of Austria. The very proper Hapsburg Court also turned him down.

There is little doubt, however, that the two Imperial Courts would have been less strict in the matter of etiquette had Alexander's seat on the Serbian throne been more secure and the future of the Obrenovich dynasty less uncertain. Their agents had discovered that the dynasty had lost the loyalty of the army, that is, of the officers' corps.

The officers—many of them peasants' sons—were deeply offended by the king's marriage and by the dismissal of the generals and colonels who had opposed it. They felt that during Alexander's rule the international prestige of Serbia had sunk so low and internal conditions had so degenerated that, unless something was done in a hurry, the country would have to abandon its mission of liberating the rest of the Serbians from the Turkish yoke. The officers looked with envy and concern at the vigorous activity of the Bulgarian revolutionaries in Macedonia and they feared that the Macedonian question would be solved without Serbia's participation. The national treasury was empty. The army was ill-equipped. For months, officers and soldiers had received no pay. And for all this many blamed the king.

The political parties were completely demoralized. All of them had served and were prepared to serve the king on his own terms. Power was the only aspiration of most of the political leaders and the source of power was the king. The army alone stood outside the political mire. It alone was capable of independent action to end the regime of shame.

A conspiracy was formed during 1901. The plan was simple: to kill both Alexander and Draga.

One of the leaders of the plot was Captain Dragutin Dimitriyevich who because of his great physical strength was called Apis—after

the Bull in Egyptian mythology. He was a born revolutionary, a fanatical patriot, unselfish and honest, with the gift of attracting people, of drawing them into the wildest adventures as if they were going to a party. Courageous to the point of recklessness, he offered membership in the conspiracy even to the king's adjutants, and his friends had to warn him not to offer it to the king himself.

Each conspirator—civilians were barred—had to sign his name to the following oath:

"Realizing the certain collapse of the Fatherland if the present condition continues even for the shortest period of time, and proclaiming King Alexander and his mistress Draga Mashin responsible for all our evils, we swear, and bind ourselves with our signatures, that we will kill him and her. On the Serbian throne, washed clean with the blood of these persons without honor, we will place Peter Karageorgevich, grandson of the Supreme Leader [Kara-George] and son of the Legal Prince, the late Alexander Karageorgevich."

It took extraordinary courage to sign this document. No one knows how many officers put their names to it. But the astonishing fact is that the conspirators were not betrayed either by the signers or by those who refused to participate.

Peter Karageorgevich, living in exile in Switzerland and known as the "Red prince" because of his interest in liberal and radical ideas, knew nothing of all this.

Alexander and Draga suspected a conspiracy of some sort. She wept for days at a time and could neither eat nor sleep. The couple felt secure only in the Royal Palace guarded by over a hundred officers, soldiers and gendarmes. They did not guess that the conspirators had decided that the palace was the only place where the murder could be successfully carried out.

At two o'clock in the morning of May 29, 1903, twenty-eight young officers assembled in the Officers' Club and awaited the order of their elected commander, Colonel Alexander Mashin, to march against the palace. Mashin was a brother of the queen's first husband. Fifteen years before he had been one of the king's instructors and had carried the boy piggy-back.

At the appointed hour one battalion of troops failed to appear. For a moment the conspirators were confused, uncertain. Suddenly the voice of Apis rang out: "*Gospodo, napred*!—Gentlemen, forward!"

The young officers started on the double, followed by a company of the King's Guard. When they reached the palace, the missing battalion was there with a battery of artillery. While the palace was

being surrounded, other officers occupied the central telephone and telegraph stations in Belgrade to prevent outside communication. At the palace gates, to let the assassins in, was a young lieutenant named Peter Zhivkovich; but he was too nervous to find the key-hole. Twenty-six years later he became premier and minister of war in the dictatorial government of King Alexander Karageorgevich.

The first to enter the palace was Apis. In the room of the adjutant-of-the-day he found two officers. One was a conspirator. The other, who was off duty, knew of the conspiracy but had told them he would defend the king if they tried to murder him while he was on duty. The task of the adjutant-conspirator was to unlock the doors leading to the royal sleeping chamber. But before Apis had a chance to warn his followers that one of the adjutants was a friend and the other a neutral enemy, they rushed into the room; someone fired and in the confusion both adjutants were killed.

Bells now began to ring all through the palace and in the guard-house in the courtyard. The keys which the dead conspirator was to have provided could not be found. Apis gave the order to blow up the doors with dynamite.

As the wick began to glow, the shadow of a man was seen vanishing in a dark corridor. Apis ran after him. He met the fire of two soldiers. With three bullets in his body, Apis spent the night standing erect with his back against a wall; he almost bled to death.

Reaching the royal bedroom, the conspirators found it empty. They knew Alexander and Draga were in the palace. If they tried to escape, they would be seized by the troops outside.

The officers rushed from room to room, knocking against walls in search of secret hiding-places. By four o'clock they were desperate. Colonel Mashin was about to order the artillery to destroy the palace when someone thought of getting hold of the king's first adjutant, General Laza Petrovich, who was ordered on pain of death to produce the royal couple in ten minutes.

The bedroom had two windows on one side, on the other a double glass door leading to a closet. The windows and the door were surrounded by identical draperies.

The king and queen were behind the double door in their night clothes. They could hear the officers' voices.

Then, after a long silence, suddenly a familiar voice called out: "Your Majesty!"

The king did not answer.

Again: "Your Majesty! I am your friend, your adjutant, Laza

Petrovich." A gun was pointing at his head. Around him stood five conspirators frozen into silence.

"Who is calling me?" came the king's voice.

"It is I—Laza. Open the door to your officers."

The turning of the key broke the dreadful dialogue. The king was shot dead the instant he appeared. The queen threw herself over his body. Another shot—and Draga Mashin was dead too. Both corpses were thrown from a window into the courtyard. They were buried the next night without ceremony.

Thus ended the Obrenovich dynasty.

The conspirators then did an amazing thing for army officers. They turned the government over to civilians representing all political groups. Peter Karageorgevich was elected king, and the National Assembly in a published statement expressed its gratitude to the army for "having protected order and legality, and defended the interests of the Fatherland." The regicide thus received the sanction of the elected representatives of the people.

The European press treated the regicide as an outrage beyond adequate expression by civilized people, as a new proof that Serbians —along with all the other South-Slavs—were a barbaric breed. It forgot that regicide was not a Serbian speciality; that even the English and the French had indulged in it.

At any rate, this is how Serbia, which Kara-George and his peasants had tried to liberate from the Turks a hundred years before, was really freed at last.

Peter Karageorgevich, already in middle age, was a good man. The palace revolution and his election to the throne came to him as a complete surprise. All his life he had been poor. As a French lieutenant he had fought in the Franco-Prussian war of 1871 and had received the Legion of Honor—the only decoration he ever wore. Later he made his way to Bosnia, to fight in uprisings against the Turks. A naturally modest, studious man, he spent many years in the quiet atmosphere of Switzerland, where he translated into Serbian John Stuart Mill's essay *On Liberty*.

The only king of modern Serbia who learned something from history, Peter gave the little country its period of constructive development and all-around greatness—1903-'14.

The "Yugoslav Idea" Begins in Croatia

In 1390, after the Serbian defeat at Kossovo, the Catholic town of Dubrovnik in Dalmatia, then known as the Republic of Ragusa, received Serbian refugees within its walls and permitted them to build an Orthodox church. And from the middle of the fifteenth century till the tiny republic's extinction by Napoleon, Dubrovnik paid an annual contribution to the Serbian branch of the Orthodox Church—first to the monastery in Jerusalem and subsequently to the monasteries of Hilendar and St. Paul on Mount Athos. Also, during the worst periods of Turkish rule alms-seeking Serbian monks came freely to Croatia, where they were countenanced by some of the Catholic bishops.

Almost continually, even when local and general cleavages seemed deepest and when ultra-nationalist rage rose to its highest pitch, there were outstanding individuals and large sections of the people in various South-Slav regions who consistently felt the mutuality of all South-Slavs. There were Catholic Croatians who demonstratively called themselves Serbians to indicate that, although they were not Orthodox, they had no sense of difference from the Slavs of Serbia, Bosnia and Montenegro. The phrase "Serbo-Croatian" appeared.

All sorts of ideas bobbed up. At times nationalistic Croatians and Serbians could not for the life of them imagine a desirable future for their respective countries without completely ignoring the fact that the other country's inhabitants considered themselves a separate, distinct nation. But the quality of emotionalism bound up with such desperate nationalist ideas betrayed an unadmitted recognition of the fact that in their roots as well as in many direct ways the Serbians and Croatians were identical people. The tacit recognition of their essential closeness led Harold W. V. Temperley, an Englishman, to

include a fairly comprehensive history of Croatia in his excellent book entitled merely *History of Serbia* (London, 1917). It led some Croatians to talk of Serbians as "Orthodox Croatians," and some Serbians to talk of Croatians as "Catholic Serbians." For a long time well-informed people have found it all but impossible to think of either Serbia or Croatia without thinking also of the other.

It is true, however, that the dissimilar historical experiences of the Croatians and Serbians made them rather unlike in certain respects.

Turkish oppression had stimulated in the Serbians a heroic, dramatic "liberty or death" mood, while at the same time their mental and emotional activity had grown circuitous and parodoxical under both the earlier Byzantine and the later Turkish period. It is difficult to shake off the ingrained habits of centuries, and when the Serbians finally gained their freedom, their conspirational attitude remained. Many still could bring themselves to trust only Serbians. They had made their own a good many Eastern customs. Like the Turks, they drank coffee, largely abstaining from wine. The status of women was somewhat influenced by the segregation of the harem. Serbian speech was subtle, often with several possible meanings. They were masters in the art of *podvala*—leading you into a conversational trap. Even the uneducated peasant was capable of sarcasm that cut in more than one direction.

The Croatians, dominated by the Hapsburgs, developed a milder, less desperate, more direct outlook partly because the Croatians were Roman Catholics like the Austrian and Magyar nobility. They had *that* in common with their national enemies. Still more important was the fact that Austria-Hungary was a Western empire. Its policies were anti-Slavic and oppressive, but they were not nearly as bad as the Ottoman power. Its divide-and-rule method was maddening in the long run. From day to day, however, it was strictly legal, legalistic. It was loaded down with a parasitic German-Magyar bureaucracy. But it did not often exclude temporizing and compromise. Naturally under its influence the Croatian character differed from the Serbian. The average Croatian, like the average Slovenian, enjoyed drinking wine. Also, while the Croatian peasant, his spirit hugging Matiya Gubets, was still almost dormant politically, the Croatian intellectual was being fired by Western enlightenment and the French Revolution; his Serbian counterpart, still facing the East, was partly shut off from Western breezes.

Nevertheless, under and through these differences ran the current of oneness. The "Yugoslav idea" began to stir; at first mainly in

Croatia. It was a new kind of nationalism with many approaches, in many forms, with various temporary results. Movements rose and fell, each wave leaving a residue which added to the essential soundness of the idea of South-Slavic unity.

"Illyrism," the first considerable Yugoslav movement, was brought on partly by the political ideas underlying Napoleon's creation of the Illyrian Province in 1809. The province included most of the Slovenian lands, the Croatian Littoral, all of Dalmatia down to Montenegro. Napoleon formed it in order to have a French outpost on the highroad to the East and a fortress on one of Austria's most vulnerable flanks. And he deliberately aimed at uniting a body of Slavs under a government actively sympathetic to their newly stirring national spirit.

Illyria existed only four years. But even this brief suspension of the frontiers which had formerly divided them, and the material and intellectual progress which promptly resulted from the efficient French government, made a profoundly favorable impression on the Slovenian and Croatian populations of Illyria, and a little later upon inland Croatia.

Ilirstvo became the watchword of numerous political thinkers; only their thinking soon expanded beyond Bonaparte's neat little scheme to all the South-Slavic regions, toward whose ultimate union they now began to aspire. Educated Croatians and Slovenians turned to the Kossovo epic, the saga of Kralyevich Marko. The heroic folklore spread among the alert Dalmatians, where mothers began to tell it to their children.

The revolt of Serbia and her emancipation from Turkish rule created a deep impression.

Then Vuk Karadjich appeared. Born under Turkish rule in the humblest circumstances, he had seized such educational opportunities as he could get hold of, first in Croatia, then—after the success of Kara-George's revolt—at the newly established secondary school in Belgrade. He was a self-made man. The physical handicap of a wooden leg did not impede, was perhaps part of the reason for, his cultural pursuits. On the temporary overthrow of Serbian liberty in 1813 he went to Vienna, where he met the Slovenian scholar, poet and folklorist, Yerney Kopitar.

A native of the lands recently included in Illyria, Kopitar had been deeply stirred by Napoleon's experiment. His influence on Vuk (as everybody called him) was decisive. The problem of language interested them both and Kopitar advised Vuk to undertake linguistic

studies as a preliminary to furthering any sort of united South-Slav cultural and political future.

Vuk gave these studies fifty years of devoted toil. He was one of those Serbians to whom "Serbia" instinctively meant Croatia also: the two countries were one and the same thing. He had no difficulty in sliding over all differences. The ultra-Croatians of his day branded him a Serbian intellectual imperialist, a spiritual pan-Serbian; but actually his soul nurtured no predatory designs on Croatia or any other South-Slav land. To him all Yugoslavs were one.

His great dictionary (1852), which met the most exacting requirements of Western scholarship and remains a linguistic authority of the first rank, fixed the form of the Serbo-Croatian literary language, overriding the endless regional dialects which had developed under different foreign influences. This indirectly encouraged a standard spoken language as well, and checked the spread of additional diversity. Vuk's motto was: "Write as you speak."

But an even greater contribution was his publication of the folklore he had gathered on his Balkan travels. It was through him that the Kossovo and Kralyevich Marko pyesmé were first printed. They created an immediate sensation in Europe and brought visitors from England—among them John Bowring. Goethe and Grimm became Vuk's personal friends.

His work gave the Yugoslav movement first of all a needed excitement. It provoked controversy of course. Opposition to his linguistic redaction came from some of the culturally conservative or backward Orthodox priests who hitherto had largely controlled Serbdom in a way that was forgetful of their antecedents' progressiveness. But his contributions were far more widely accepted than rejected. A picturesque Croatian Illyrist, Lyudevit Gaï, came to Vuk's support and much of the rest of the Croatian intelligentsia followed. The phrase "Serbo-Croatian" appeared more and more, meaning not only the language but the people.

The acceptance of Vuk's language standards by the Croatian intelligentsia was the most effective single development in making the modern Croatians and Serbians feel "one."

Illyrism attracted many Serbians in Croatia and Voyvodina—descendants of refugees from Turk-held Serbia—most of whom were politically minded and who by now were numerically strong.

In Montenegro, Prince-Bishop Peter II, alias Peter Petrovich Nyegosh, author of the poem-drama *The Mountain Wreath*, became a passionate Illyrist.

The ferment had started. But this movement, purely nationalistic, aimed only at South-Slavic unity, was caught up in the worst possible way with the wider Central- and East-European social-revolutionary events of 1847-'48.

Illyrism may have been "naive" and "romantic," but it was also revolutionary, and some of its elements—the best—could easily have been drawn into the broader European movement. Unluckily, the social-revolutionary leaders in Mittel-Europa still had strong hangovers of their own countries' ultra-nationalistic attitudes. The Germans and Magyars, for instance, were still contemptuous or uneasy about the Slavs. Louis Kossuth, leader of the revolutionary movement in Hungary, lost his customary wisdom and, at the most crucial period of both his cause and the Yugoslav movement, scorned the latter's aspirations.

Shortly before the Hungarian revolution broke out a Serbian deputation from the southern part of the Magyar State presented to the Diet at Bratislava, of which Kossuth was an outstanding member, a petition for the recognition of their national language and its official introduction into schools attended by Serbian children. Magyar reactionaries were intensely anti-Serbian partly because Austria had favored the Serbians, some of whom in turn were still somewhat pro-Austrian; but the deputation had expected Kossuth and his "liberal" party to support their claim for linguistic recognition.

Kossuth, however, reacted with a hauteur not untypical of "progressive" and "radical" leaders in "enlightened" countries when confronted by "inferior" people of "backward" countries like Serbia or Croatia. "What," he snapped at the spokesman of the deputation, "do you understand by a nation?"

"A group of people," replied the spokesman, "which possesses its own language, customs, culture, and enough consciousness of itself to want to preserve them."

Kossuth objected to this definition. "A nation," he said, "must also have its own government." He apparently meant: A nation was not a nation unless or until it had its own government. If the Serbians in Hungary insisted on considering themselves a nation, they would want a separate government. This went counter to the Magyar State; this was full-fledged anti-Magyarism; and he, Kossuth, was a Magyar first and foremost.

"We do not go so far," returned the Serbian. "One nation can live under several different governments, and again several nations can form a single state"—as they did in Austria.

But Kossuth was unable to conceive of a nation which was not definable as a state; the Serbians could not help thinking of a nation as a linguistic unit. The exchange between them ended abruptly with Kossuth's almost incredible remark: "In that case, the sword will decide!"

The nationality problem in the Balkans, just beginning to come to a head, hit one of Kossuth's blind spots. His reaction to the Serbian petition meant as plain as day that he did not consider the Croatians a nation either, and was opposed to their aspirations as well as to the Serbians'.

This tragic political occurrence had a disastrous effect on all forward-looking movements, playing right into the hands of reaction.

Had Kossuth and the Magyar revolutionaries shown the least disposition to recognize the claims of Croatia, which were an extremely live issue at the moment, or to meet the request of Hungary's Serbians in a liberal spirit, Croatian and Serbian leaders alike would have abstained from lending active support to the Hapsburg crown, and a sizable Serbian element would have cast in its lot with the progressive Hungarians. As it was, the nationalistic or "racial" intolerance of the Magyars, which was the same in the liberal Kossuth as in the reactionaries, drove their potential South-Slavic supporters into the arms of Austria, where reaction was in full and unchallenged control.

In March 1848, the Illyrist leader Lyudevit Gaï headed a Croatian delegation to the emperor to plead for the separation of Croatia from Hungary and the establishment of an autonomous Yugoslav State under the Hapsburg Crown. In contrast to Kossuth's reception, Vienna's was courteous.

The Banus of Croatia at this time was a relatively progressive nobleman, Count Josip Yelachich. He was in fact largely responsible for the recent abolition of serfdom in his country, which made him almost a popular hero. But he was a Croatian nationalist who had no use for the Magyars. Now, thanks to Kossuth, he united through anti-Magyar wrath a preponderance of Croatian political sentiment . . . and led against the Hungarian insurgents an army of forty thousand. This force was augmented by large contingents of Hungarian Serbians who had already risen against the Magyars; not only the reactionary Magyars but *all* Magyars. Prince Alexander Karageorgevich, the ruler of Serbia, yielded to Russian and Austrian pressure and remained nominally neutral; but thousands of volunteers from Serbia joined the Yelachich regiments, just as Hungarian Serbians

had fought in Serbia's war of liberation under Kara-George and Milosh Obrenovich.

The revolution of 1848 was suppressed—not so much by Yelachich and his Croatians and Serbians as by Russian cossacks whom the tsar had sent to help save the Hapsburgs, but it was the South-Slavs who were cursed and condemned by European liberal and radical intellectuals as being chiefly responsible for their defeat. They did not trouble to recall what had led the South-Slavs to fight against the rebellion. They reviled them for the collapse of Europe's Leftist uprising.

At any rate, the Hapsburg Crown thus reached the pinnacle of its power. For this its thanks were due in part to its South-Slavic subjects who had been pushed into an extreme anti-Magyar attitude.

Serbian and Croatian leaders now looked for their reward. Two Serbian-inhabited provinces, Bachka and Banat, were indeed separated from Hungary and declared to be an autonomous Serbian Voyvodina (Duchy), and Croatia was likewise made an Austrian crownland and promised local autonomy.

Illyrists thought the fulfillment of their aspirations was in sight. However, some continued willing to look forward to a "Yugoslav state within Austria," while others began to dream of Yugoslav unity in a completely separate state taking in most of the Balkans and Slovenia. Montenegro's Peter II, following Russia's anti-Austrian attitude (which co-existed with the tsar's readiness to help save the Hapsburgs), issued a proclamation announcing that the time had arrived for South-Slavic liberation from Austria and union in complete independence with all Yugoslavs outside of the German-Magyar controlled monarchy.

These high hopes were doomed to frustration; even more moderate expectations were not fulfilled. The anti-South-Slavic sentiment raging in some of the most intelligent circles in Europe depressed many Illyrists. They could not even try to reply to the calumny filling the radical and liberal press all over the Continent. They were on the spot, and the Austrian Crown was left free to do what it wished with the Yugoslav regions. It became absolutist. It continued to "divide and rule." The Magyars were more powerful than the Serbo-Croatian combination; they forced the Serbian Voyvodina back into Hungary in 1860. Croatia's promised autonomy was withheld, and in '67 the dual Austro-Hungarian system was completed by her reunion—in a markedly inferior rank—with the Magyar State, while Slovenia, Dalmatia and Istria were retained in Austria.

In these circumstances the magnetism of the Kossovo and Kralyevich Marko legends naturally drew out still more South-Slavic fervor. People also turned to *The Mountain Wreath* and their faces tautened as they read the lines in which Nyegosh summed up the tragedy of the South-Slavs:

> We are as wisps of straw tossed in the wind;
> As orphan'd sad, forsaken of the world,
> I see my people . . . ,
> No parent's hand to wipe away my tears—
> ....
> God's Heaven is shut above my head,
> Giving no answer to my cries and prayers.
> This world is now become a hell,
> And men but demons in disguise.
> Oh, dark, dark Day! oh, outlook very black!

Still the "Yugoslav idea" lived on.

That some form of the Yugoslav movement should develop in Serbia was inevitable. The first man to put it into writing (1844) was Milutin Garashanin, minister of the interior during the regime of Prince Alexander Karageorgevich; a conservative politician, scion of a wealthy family, educated abroad. He saw clearly that Turkey, although it still garrisoned Belgrade, was not Serbia's real enemy. Turkey was weak, bound to fall apart of its own decay. What Garashanin feared was that after the Ottoman collapse, Serbia would be gobbled up by either Austria or Russia, and he saw salvation only in a Balkan Union or a powerful Yugoslav state. With Russia, Garashanin thought, Serbia could treat. To be swallowed by the tsar would not be the worst possible fate. Austria, however, was an ancient and bitter enemy of the Slavs, particularly the South-Slavs. Any sort of "agreement with Austria is for Serbia a political impossibility." For that reason Garashanin advocated a united Serbo-Croatian state.

In 1848, Garashanin sent one of his representatives by the name of Matiya Ban to Sremski Karlovtsi, seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church, also to Zagreb, Dubrovnik and Cetinyé, the capital of Montenegro. In Karlovtsi, Ban impressed the need of Serbo-Croatian union in Austria upon the Serbian Patriarch, who gave him a confidential letter to deliver to the Croatian Banus Yelachich in Zagreb. Garashanin's representative told Yelachich that the government of Serbia

felt it was not in the interests of their country to permit the Magyars to destroy the Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia, and that Serbia would help in the matter. And, as mentioned earlier, Serbians did help in '48—unofficially. Then a Croatian delegation visited Belgrade to discuss with the Serbian government the problem of Serbo-Croatian cooperation.

Around 1870, following the long psychological slump caused by the events of '48, the "Yugoslav idea" became very strong again in Croatia. No longer under the old romantic label of Illyrism, it was resumed primarily as an educational movement, a determined, methodical search for effective long-range answers to the South-Slavic problem.

The leader of this movement was a remarkable and high-minded Croatian patriot with a Germanic name, Bishop Josip Strossmayer, best known in the Europe of that day as the eminent churchman who opposed the Declaration of Papal Infallibility in the Vatican Council of 1869-'70. He lived to be ninety; and his brilliant intellectual gifts and wide culture and the combined charm and force of his character gave him an influence which extended far beyond the bounds of his diocese and long after his death in 1905. Active in politics till about 1890, always recognized as a leader of the opposition to Magyar supremacy, he established the Yugoslav Academy and the University in Zagreb. Both these institutions were formed and maintained in the teeth of determined Magyar hostility. They laid the foundations of a solid higher education and an advanced scholarship in Croatia. The research carried on under their auspices concentrated on national history, antiquities and literature. The Academy was a center of Yugoslav culture—not merely Croatian.

In the '60s Bishop Strossmayer corresponded with Prince Michael Obrenovich of Serbia and very likely also with his foreign minister Garashanin who, with an eye to a possible war against Turkey—and also thinking of Austria—were concluding agreements with Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro and Rumania. The actual letters have been lost, but historians believe that they discussed the effects upon Austria of the staggering defeats she had suffered in her wars against Italy and Prussia. Would she collapse or hold out? . . .

This Catholic bishop's liberal-nationalist policy found further expression in his friendly relations with the Orthodox clergy in Serbia, Greece and Russia. And following the example of a Croatian bishop, Gergur Ninski, who had lived nearly a millennium earlier, Strossmayer encouraged the Old-Slavic liturgy known as the Glagolitic Rite

which survived in parts of Croatia, and secured for it the protection of Pope Leo XIII.

He was a contemporary of the Slovenian writer and bishop of Maribor, Anton Martin Slomshek, who created the Apostolate of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the purpose of which was to promote contact between the Catholics and the Orthodox. Cyril and Methodius, mainly credited with the Christianization of the South-Slavs, are regarded as saints by both Churches.

The first Croatian political party was called simply the National Opposition, later the National Party. For a time Strossmayer was its head. It was anti-Magyar and pro-Hapsburg, largely because the Magyars were anti-Croatian and anti-Hapsburg. The Croatians were essentially anti-Hapsburg also; but not being powerful enough to fight both Vienna and Budapest, they joined forces with Vienna, the less immediate of two evils, in the hope that the Imperial Court would see the necessity of converting the monarchy into a federation of national states.

Against the National Party stood a man named Anté Starchevich who at the session of the Croatian Diet in '61 had caused a sensation by declaring that Austria was as dangerous to the interest of the Croatian people as Hungary and that, therefore, the Croatians must create their own independent state without any administrative ties either to Vienna or Budapest. His motto was "*Bog i Hrvati*—God and the Croatians." He founded the *Stranka Prava*, the party of Rights—Croatian Rights.

After the Prussians defeated the Austrians at Sadowa in '66, the Hapsburg emperor ceased to be head of the German Confederation of States. Prussia became the leading German state and Austria felt compelled to spread toward the southeast, that is, at the expense of the South-Slavs. This change in Austria's position in Europe brought about a drastic reorientation of the Hapsburg foreign and internal policies. They struck a bargain with the Magyars. In '67 Austria and Hungary became a Dual Monarchy. Austria took Dalmatia and Istria. Croatia and Slavonia were left up in the air, to cope with the Magyars as best they could.

As a result, a new agreement had to be drawn up between Hungary and Croatia. In preparation, the Government party, known as Unionists, fixed the elections to the Diet which would pass upon the agreement. The Unionist aspirant for the office of Banus, Baron Levin Rauch, knew that under the existing electoral law Stross-

mayer's National Party would obtain a majority. He asked the emperor to decree a new electoral law. The emperor obliged, and for the first time in Croatia the electors were subjected to police pressure. The National Party was defeated; the Government party concluded the agreement with Hungary which made Croatia-Slavonia a department of the government of Hungary.

Up to this time, the Banus of Croatia had been appointed by the emperor at the recommendation of the Croatian Diet. Now he was appointed on the advice and with the consent of the Hungarian prime minister. Financially, Croatia was made completely dependent on Hungary. Also, the port of Rieka (Fiume) was separated from Croatia and placed under direct Hungarian jurisdiction. Hungary made one concession: it recognized the Croatian language as legal in Croatia and Slavonia both in autonomous and joint departments of government. But that concession, it soon appeared, Hungary meant to annul at the first opportunity.

This unsatisfactory agreement with Hungary aroused Croatian public opinion, and in the next elections, in '71, the National Party scored a great victory. Feeling ran so high that the Dual Monarchy offered a sop in the form of the Bloody Frontier, which—with its high proportion of Serbian population—was incorporated into Croatia. The Croatians were pleased but not satisfied.

From then until the end of the century, the Croatians continued to struggle against Magyar domination, but their struggles did not take in the masses of the people. Nor did they interest the rest of the world. For twenty years, from '83 to 1903, Croatia was ruled by Count Khuen-Hedervary, a Magyarized Croatian. During this period Croatia had three political groups: the National Party, the Independent National Party and the Party of Rights. Their program was essentially the same: formation under the Hapsburg throne of an autonomous Croatian state, including Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia and Istria. They could not go any further without having the charge of high treason clamped on them.

But in '84 there appeared in the Croatian Diet a man without a party. His name was Josip Frank. He was a Zagreb lawyer, a renegade Jew whom psychological discomfort had turned into an ultra-Croatian. He was brilliant, erratic, opportunistic and exceedingly ambitious, with a passion for politics as politics. A Vienna agent with orders to help deepen the inner chaos in the Slavic Balkans, he started a movement called the "Party of Pure Rights." His followers called themselves *Pravashi*; others called them, contemptuously,

Frankovtsi. They included a few well-to-do Zagrebchani, sections of the small-town *petite bourgeoisie*, a few priests, and a good many plain and fancy bums, some of whom organized into local terroristic gangs.

The movement reached its apex around 1905; by 1913 hardly anything was left of it. Meantime, however, its gangsterism spread under Frank's personal leadership into momentarily serious proportions. Bands of Frankovtsi staged street riots, terrorized the countryside, attacked and robbed Yugoslav-minded people.

The movement would hardly be worth mentioning were it not that one of its inconspicuous gangster-followers back in the early 1910s was Anté Pavelich, whom Hitler and Mussolini set up in '41 as the fuehrer of the "Independent Croatian State." . . . Such are the diabolically evil strands woven, partly as a consequence of international power politics, into the nightmare that has been tearing up the life of the South-Slavs for twelve hundred years. . . .

In the 1870s, about the time that Bishop Strossmayer launched his movement in Croatia, the Bosnia-Herzegovina issue burst wide open and began to affect the whole "Yugoslav idea."

The Turks still held Bosnia and Herzegovina, but their power was on its last legs; uprising followed uprising. Trying to suppress the insurgents, who drew their inspiration from the Kossovo Cult and the liberation of Serbia, the Turks committed atrocities no less horrible than the German-Italian-Magyar-Ustashi terror in occupied Yugoslavia during '41-'43.

The general disorder drove the non-combatant Bosnians and Herzegovinians not only to Serbia but to Austria's Dalmatia and Hungary's Croatia. This created a refugee problem and, of more concern to Vienna and Budapest, excited pro-Serbian and Yugoslav sentiment.

What to do? Should Austria occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina? When the question first came into open discussion (in '76) Strossmayer wrote a letter to Gladstone urging that the provinces, or at least Bosnia, be placed immediately under Serbian protection. That was statesmanship. But power politics won. The imperial schemes of Britain required Disraeli to be anti-Russian and anti-Serbian, and at the Congress of Berlin he swung his influence in favor of the occupation of both lands by Austria as a "necessary police measure."

The occupation was a confused, brutal business, but it eventually "restored order" in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the Austro-Hungarian regime scrupulously avoided anything that might smack of

progress. It was incapable of reacting to the distress prevalent among the bulk of the people who had been under the Turks for over four hundred years. It conciliated the Mohammedanized upper-class five percent at the expense of the peasantry, leaving the acute land question unsolved. It built roads and railways for military purposes, carefully avoiding regions where they might be advantageous to the inhabitants. Communications necessary to economic development were refused.

Hungary viewed with bitter alarm the possible rivalry of Bosnia, a potentially rich agricultural country; and the Vienna government followed its usual policy of placating the Magyars at the expense of the other nationalities in the monarchy. Education was withheld. "For my mission," said Kallay, the first administrator in Sarajevo, "one gendarme is worth five teachers," and this spirit prevailed. The discontent of the lower classes—ninety-five percent of the population—grew like wildfire, while educated, progressive-minded groups realized that a sound development under Austria was impossible.

Dissatisfaction spread. It produced an incipient literary movement full of the spirit of protest. It began to touch the few well-to-do Orthodox Serbians. And some of the most effective people, seeing no prospect of improvement except in union with Serbia, remote as such a solution then appeared, began to migrate and to set up their political headquarters in Belgrade, although the situation there too—as sketched in the last chapter—was far from ideal.

Following the Congress of Berlin's decision Strossmayer remarked that "if Vienna, or rather Budapest, means to govern the new provinces . . . for their own profit, the Austrians and Hungarians will end up by being more hated than the Turks." This came to pass before the end of the nineteenth century, and had prompt repercussions in Dalmatia, in Croatia, in Slovenia, among the Serbians under Hungary, to say nothing of the populations of Serbia and Montenegro.

In September '95 His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty Franz Josef, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, came on an official visit to Zagreb, and a group of patriotic university students greeted him on the main square by burning the Magyar flag. Banus Khuen-Hedervary was furious, then mortified; he scarcely knew what to make of it. He had ruthlessly suppressed all political life in the country. That had not been difficult. Only the well-to-do and the upper-crust government officials had the right to vote; in fact, as late as 1906 there were but forty-five thousand voters in the population of

three million. These voters could be easily terrorized into line. All the groups were loyal to the Throne. Croatians of the old school centered their hopes on the person of the King-Emperor, *their* Franz Josef. For only he appeared powerful enough to save them from Magyar domination. So in a blissful mood Khuen-Hedervary had invited His Majesty to visit his loyal subjects. Now this— The incident came as a staggering blow.

It was the work of a group of university students—Croatian and Serbian, Catholic and Orthodox, rich and poor from all parts of the country—under the leadership of Stepan Radich, who thirty years later, in Yugoslavia, loomed up as a great peasant leader. They were imprisoned and expelled from the University of Zagreb. From prison most of them went to Prague, where they listened to Professor Thomas Masaryk. And they became anti-Hapsburg, also pro-Russian, Yugoslav and pan-Slav.

Young people were getting hold of an idea bigger than "Croatian rights"—big as the spirit of the Kossovo and Kralyevich Marko pyesmé. This generation produced the South-Slavic grave-diggers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire: Fran Supilo, Svetozar Pribichevich, Ivan Lorkovich, Gerga Tushkan, Anté Trumbich, Veceslav Wilder, and others.

Thanks partly to Masaryk's inspiration, the Croatian and Serbian youth in Austria-Hungary during the first decade of the twentieth century went directly to the people, speaking an exciting new language about universal suffrage, financial independence, protection of peasant properties, protection of industrial labor, personal freedom, freedom of speech and the press. The peasant understood it at once, and he responded.

Some of these new intellectuals went so far as to whisper the word "*republika.*"

Soon the peasants were burning Magyar flags, destroying railroad tracks and stations, attacking tax-collectors and other representatives of the regime. Shooting at the rioters was of no avail, nor martial law nor prisons. Vienna and Budapest saw with chagrin that the regime of Khuen-Hedervary instead of producing peace had produced a revolutionary situation. The haughty Banus was removed from office.

His departure from Zagreb in 1903 coincided with the murder of Alexander and Draga in Belgrade.

Serbia . . . there was a new Serbia under Peter Karageorgevich, whom Stepan Radich had greeted at the station in Vienna when his

train stopped on the way from Switzerland to Belgrade with: "Long live the Yugoslav King Peter!"

The new Serbia too was anti-Austrian and pro-Russian. Like a magnet it drew to itself the Austrian South-Slavs. The crowning of King Peter had been a Yugoslav manifestation. After it, the new king had received the Slovenians, Croatians and Serbians from Austria as representatives of their peoples.

There, in new Serbia, a group of university professors and army officers created a new organization called *Slavenski Yug* (The Slavic South) whose aim was to bring about a "federation of South-Slavic republics."

Republika ——

Croatia . . . how to bring about a new Croatia?

Out of the political ferment came a new party, *Hrvatska Napredna Stranka,* the Croatian Progressive Party. Its program was democracy and anti-clericalism; it gathered together all the leading intellectuals. This occurred at a time when every other month or so Serbian, Slovenian, Croatian and Bulgarian literary and artistic societies convened in Belgrade, Lublyana, Zagreb or Sofia; and there was a great deal of excitement, full of political implications, especially when Vienna refused its South-Slavic subjects passports on which to travel to meetings held in Belgrade or Sofia.

At this time the whole of Hungarian public opinion was up in arms against Vienna because the emperor refused to allow Magyar regiments to use the Magyar language in giving commands. This was history putting the shoe on the other foot, but the Croatians in the new Independent Party were realistic enough to let by-gones be by-gones. They did not recall Kossuth's remarks in '48; they just said nothing about that issue. And in 1905, meeting in Fiume, all Croatian and Serbian parties except the terroristic Frankovtsi adopted a resolution favoring cooperation with the anti-Hapsburg movement in Hungary. They supported the Magyar language demand because it was just, and because they wanted the same privilege—but in the end the Magyars turned down the "inferior" Croatians' offer of cooperation.

In 1903 *Serbobran* (Serbian Defender), organ of the Serbian Independent Party, representing nearly all the Serbians in Austria-Hungary, headed by the brilliant Svetozar Pribichevich, had said: "No one can blame us if the aim of our policy is the protection of Serbdom. And the protection of Serbdom imposes on Serbians the duty of defending also the independence of Croatia-Slavonia against the forces that stand in its way." Now in Fiume in '05 all Serbian and

Croatian parties in the monarchy, again excepting the Frankovtsi, formed the Croatian-Serbian Coalition. The resolutions enunciated at the meeting favored the "reunion of South-Slavic lands," stated that "every nation has the right to decide freely and independently concerning its existence and its fate," and advanced the idea that "Serbians and Croatians are one people." Some of the leaders knew that the solution of the Yugoslav problem would come only in independent union with Serbia, but they joined the others in signing a petition to the Imperial and Royal Government for a union within Austria of all their lands on the basis of "equality of treatment in all matters regarding Serbians and Croatians." This was a milestone in Yugoslav politics.

In the elections of 1906 the Coalition won a sweeping victory. A delegation went to Budapest hoping that, in view of the stand they had taken toward the question of using Magyar in Magyar regiments, the Hungarians would grant at least some of their demands. They were disappointed. Budapest was accustomed to do the demanding. Besides, the Coalition was dangerous. Vienna and Budapest had begun to make plans to destroy it.

In the Zagreb Diet, the Coalition was attacked by the violently anti-Serbian Frankovtsi whose official organ published a series of articles "proving" that the Serbo-Croatians' real aim was to create a common state with Serbia. The articles hinted that Coalition leaders were in the pay of Belgrade.

The significance of this charge of high treason against the Coalition, inspired by Vienna, lies in the fact that it converted an internal Austro-Hungarian problem into an international problem. Vienna went out of its way to involve Serbia. Why?

Under the Treaty of Berlin, Austria was permitted to *occupy* Bosnia and Herzegovina but not to *annex* them. By 1908, however, Vienna had made up its mind that the time had arrived to end the fiction of occupation. But to incorporate the provinces into the monarchy, Austria had to have an excuse. So she decided she had to protect herself from the danger of Greater-Serbia propaganda, which was spreading across her frontiers from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

To prove the existence of that propaganda, Austria arrested fifty-three Serbians and accused them of high treason. The arrests began on August 18, 1908, the birthday of Franz Josef. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was proclaimed seven weeks later. The High-Treason Trial of Zagreb opened on March 25, 1909 and became a European sensation. For the first time in their history the South-

Slavs had the support of the British government. Austria had broken an international treaty; torn it up as if it were "a scrap of paper"—a phrase used then for the first time. And the "Serbo-Croatian question" was brought to the attention of Europe.

From the viewpoint of her own welfare, Austria was extremely dumb. The trial, which ended with the conviction of thirty-one Serbians who were sentenced to terms of from five to twelve years, had an immense propaganda value to the Yugoslav cause. It stirred up pro-Serbian sentiment. The Coalition became stronger than ever. In 1910 the number of votes it drew in Croatia-Slavonia increased from the previous election's fifty thousand to two hundred thousand, and the Croatian Diet got forty-seven Coalition deputies out of a total membership of seventy-three. The ultra-Croatian parties got twenty-three, and Radich's Peasant Party three. The anti-Croatian Serbian Radicals did not win a single seat.

The question in Vienna was: What to do about it? Give in to the Coalition by granting these "Serbo-Croatians" a state of their own and so turn the Dual Monarchy into a Triple Monarchy? The idea was exciting, but immensely complicated; the Magyars—the most stubborn crowd of politicians under the sun—were bound to be against it. None the less, this notion, called Trialism, gained ground with some of the insiders on the Ballplatz—the Viennese Downing Street. The old emperor, conservative from side-whiskers to toe-nails, saw nothing in it. But it fit into the anti-Magyar attitude of the crown prince, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. In fact, in 1914 Trialism was partly responsible for his trip to Sarajevo, where—on June 28th, *Vidovdan*, the anniversary of the Battle of Kossovo—he was assassinated by Gavrilo Princip, who had grown up in the Cult of Kossovo.

Austrian "statesmen" had no understanding of the Cult of Kossovo. They bungled things at every move. Trying to quench the South-Slavic imagination, they only inflamed it further.

Then came the Balkan wars. In the First, the Serbians, Greeks and Bulgarians scored swift victories over the Turks, all but tossing the Crescent out of Europe. The Second Balkan War, between the former allies, bewildered some of the enthusiasts of the "Yugoslav idea" in Austria-Hungary, but not too much, not for long. The overwhelming Serbian victory over the perfidy of official Bulgaria restored the whole-hearted Yugoslav mood.

Earlier in this volume I quote Ivan Cankar, the Slovenian novelist who in the early 1910s reached the apex of his perceptive and cre-

ative powers. He was not a politician and almost never spoke in public. On April 19, 1913, however, shortly after the outbreak of the First Balkan War, something impelled him to rise at a meeting in Lublyana and deliver himself of a speech in which he summed up and brought into focus the South-Slavic thoughts and feelings of that period.

"The victories of the Balkan states," he said, "have suddenly forced the Yugoslav problem into the forefront of European attention. Actually the so-called Great Powers have never before realized that the problem exists. Serbian, Bulgarian and Greek cannon have now announced it to the world; now it can be ignored no longer.

"It is tragic that the announcement had to be made in this way. We are of course frankly happy at the news of our brother-nations' military successes. But our happiness is made bitter by the thought that victory came at the sacrifice of whole rivers of live, throbbing young blood. Wrath all but overwhelms my mind when I think that this bloodshed would have been unnecessary had the European Powers ever been what they say they are—guardians of culture and civilization.

"Since the Congress of Berlin, more than thirty years ago, a vast crowd of foppish, empty-headed counts and barons have sat around and pondered the Balkan situation—with but the most negative results. . . . So our brother-nations decided to do something about it themselves, and they have won.

"European diplomacy is deeply displeased by this turn of events. It is so terribly undiplomatic. Especially upset are the Austrian diplomats. Diplomacy, you know, thrives on problems; it has to have them —the more the better . . . and so naturally when the people begin to solve problems themselves Count Berchtold [Austria's foreign minister] doesn't like it at all.

"Oh, there is great perturbation on the Ballplatz these days. One would laugh at the spectacle were we not all so terribly caught up in the whole bloody process. And the process is a result of the ancient and recent fancy-work of European diplomacy. We cannot laugh, but we can do something else—realize that the last thing we are is Austrian, realize that we are not only Slovenians but part of a big family that dwells in the regions between the Julian Alps and the Aegean Sea. When the first shot was fired in this Balkan war it echoed in the remotest Slovenian village. People who have never had the least interest in politics now breathlessly watch the great drama to the southeast. In all of us something stirs—like the yearning of a

prisoner. But it is not only that. All at once we feel a spark of the same strength, self-confidence and essential life-force that is asserting itself in the south. We were weak; now we see that our brothers are strong; now we can face the future.

"When cannon barked in the Balkans, official Austria took steps to 'solve' the Yugoslav problem. In Carniola, Styria and Dalmatia it rounded up a lot of 'traitors.' In Vienna it beat up Serbian students. It declared a war of calumny on Serbia and Montenegro. That is Count Berchtold's way of dealing with the Yugoslav problem. He sees it as a terribly complicated business, a matter for mysterious diplomatic exertion.

"The Count is an intellectual, not at all like the average peasant in our villages to whom the Yugoslav problem is beginning to look so simple that it is not a problem at all. If you ask the average peasant about it, and give him time to find words to say what he has in mind, you would hear something like this: 'If the South-Slavic nations think we are kin, and that it would be best for us to unite and live together, then in God's name let us make a federal republic of Yugoslavia! A nation hasn't very much to give the world unless it is a contented nation with a place under the sun and an opportunity to show what is in it.'

"That is what the average man who has never had anything to do with European power politics, would say. He rejects diplomacy even if he knows nothing about it. His peasant common sense also rejects the system of society as it exists today. . . .

"It may be true that the average man's solution of the Yugoslav question is utopian. The difficulties surrounding it may seem insurmountable. On the other hand, utopian ideas have a curious tendency to come true. Usually stupidity in their antagonists helps them toward realization. I think that Austrian diplomacy is doing a lot for the Yugoslav idea. Things are developing according to Hegel's dialectic: whenever stupidity reaches its climax, it topples over; then, lo and behold! it turns into wisdom. Or else wisdom gets its chance.

"English diplomats are better than those in Austria; which of course isn't paying them much of a compliment. In a sense, they actually are worse because they are better. Let me explain. If an Englishman sat where Count Berchtold sits in Vienna, he would get busy after the first Serbian victory and compel the Austrian and Magyar magnates to give the Yugoslavs a few of the rights and opportunities which belong to them. That would be smart from his point of view. But it might really be bad for the Yugoslav idea. Berchtold

is doing much better by us. Lacking the Englishman's 'realistic' cleverness, he keeps piling stupidity on stupidity; soon the heap will have to fall over; then there will be a chance for wisdom.

"We Slovenians and Croatians are inclined to be Austrian patriots, but we are being pushed by the Berchtolds into the Yugoslav movement, into *irredenta.* Man is so made that when he is in darkness he instinctively gropes toward the light. Our old stepmother Austria would have been clever had she brought a little light into the house, so her children would not have needed to hang over the window-sill all the time. But what does she do? She chases the children away from the window; she tries to extinguish the light outside.

"Of course stepmother Austria is not alone. There is her energetic younger sister Germany. . . . Recently a Berlin journalist named Maximilian Harden, who is famous because once he drank a bottle of wine with Bismarck, lectured in Vienna on the Balkan problem. In the audience were Count Berchtold and his diplomatic aides. And Harden said to them that Austria must not allow the erection of a Slavic fortress between the Aegean and Adriatic Seas. He used the strongest possible language in condemning history for having placed the Yugoslavs in the Balkans. How impertinent of history!

"But what leaps at us from the Harden lecture is this: official Austria is the exponent of German imperialism, which is stupid too, but in a different way. It is virile, it has not yet reached its peak, while Berchtold's is about to topple over. . . . German *Drang nach Osten,* working through Austria, finds our presence in these southeastern parts of Europe intolerable. It cannot force us all to emigrate to America by next Tuesday. So it gets the Berchtolds to tighten the screws economically, politically and culturally wherever they can. It may seem a little strange that a state should hate a large body of its citizens; but that is the case. Croatia groans under absolutism; here in Slovenia they are out to Germanize us.

"But this goes against nature. . . . The South-Slavs are now split among five states [Austria, Hungary, Montenegro, Serbia and Bulgaria]. In Austria-Hungary we are so distributed that effective political life is impossible. Although Croatians and Slovenians are under the same ruler, Zagreb is farther from Lublyana than from Paris or Madrid. . . .

"It will require great effort and patience to alter this situation. It must be altered in order to enable the Yugoslav peoples to make their contribution to the totality of human life. That is the problem in a nutshell. It is first of all a political problem.

"The difficulties ahead should not be underestimated. By blood we Serbians, Croatians, Bulgarians and Slovenians are brothers. Linguistically we are at least cousins. Culturally, however we have had different upbringing. . . . Blame it on history if you like. . . . But we can do something about it. As a start, let every Slovenian learn Serbo-Croatian. Berchtold can't keep you from doing that. And it will be of immense value when we finally join our brothers to the south. We will have less trouble in getting acquainted.

"And of course we invite them to take up Slovenian and look at our culture. We have something here in this tiny land which is good, which has come about in spite of economic poverty and the endless obstacles placed in our way by Austria. And what we have now suddenly throbs with new power. . . . Let us keep our native culture healthy and spiritually rich, so that eventually we will not go to our brother-nations asking for alms but bearing gifts."

Then Ivan Cankar went to prison.

Serbia's High Moment--Then Sarajevo: 1903-'14

PETER KARAGEORGEVICH WAS A DEMOCRAT IN EVERY SENSE OF the word. The republican form of government he had observed in Switzerland strongly appealed to him, and he wished the Assembly had elected him president instead of king.

In strictest adherence to the constitution, he allowed the political parties to settle their own differences. The Radicals were the strongest party in the country, and they got into power. There was endless chicanery of course, but in retrospect it seems of minor significance —at least until 1913. Generally speaking, politics quieted down. Under Nikola Pashich, now a rich man getting richer, the Charshiya continued powerful; but even so, the peasant, the village, progressed.

The basic resource of the land—the character of plain people, the majority—was being tapped, and freedom geared it to the strengthening state, girding itself to drive the Turks out of Europe and to destroy the *Shvaba*, the German—the Austrian especially. The army, so depressed during 1900-'03, was rejuvenated. Apis and the other members of the Black Hand devoted themselves to schemes for furthering liberation.

Foreign policy was firmly tied to Russia, whose minister, Nicholas Hartwig, was the only salient non-Serbian source of power in Serbia. The boon companion of Nikola Pashich, he was as influential in Belgrade as the American ambassador is, say, in Panama or Cuba.

At the turn of the century the international situation had radically changed. Faced with the growing menace of German imperialism, Britain joined in a triple entente with France and Russia, and lost some of her traditional animosity toward the aspirations of the Balkan Slavs. Britain turned against Austria-Hungary as well as Turkey,

for her diplomats perceived that Austria was the spearhead of Germany's push-to-the-East. Now Croatia as well as Serbia was the subject of international disputes and tentative plots. But to the Western Powers both countries were lands, not peoples. They had no interest in, nor insight into, the South-Slavs' national problem.

The Serbian nationalist-revolutionary movement was spilling over into Austria-Hungary; into the heart of Croatian life. Secret and semi-secret organizations with a broad Yugoslav program were formed in Belgrade. They established liaison with the leaders of the Serbo-Croatian Coalition in Zagreb and with the newly aroused anti-Austrian movements in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Dalmatia. All this activity had the energy of profound resolution. Its prime movers, men like Apis, knew what they wanted and would stop at nothing to attain it.

As Cankar predicted, Austrian stupidity, born of deathly fear of the Slavic ferment, worked blindly and hard for the Yugoslav nationalists. Up to 1909 Vienna could easily have broken up the Serbo-Croatian Coalition so completely that future collaboration might never have been possible on any basis. Had she incorporated Bosnia and Herzegovina—claimed by both Serbians and Croatians—into an autonomous Croatian state, thus recognizing their Croatian character only, a profound Serbo-Croatian schism would have arrested the Yugoslav movement. Instead, she annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, making them a separate province under Austrian rule; she thereby antagonized both Croatians and Serbians, and threw them closer together. She missed out on the neatest divide-and-rule trick of all.

In the meantime, Serbia, as we have seen, was preparing for war against Turkey. The Great Powers knew that an explosion in the Balkans was imminent. The alliance of Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Bulgaria made them uneasy; but they could do nothing without risking a general European war. They were not ready for that.

The Balkans struck against Turkey in 1912.

The "foppish, empty-headed counts and barons" in charge of Austria's foreign policy did not doubt that these "upstarts" would be quickly smashed by the Sultan's armies. They still regarded Turkey as a power because of her size.

The outstanding victories of the peasant-soldiers created a panic in Franz Josef's general staff. And when the generals learned of facts not mentioned in the press—that France, for instance, had sent quantities of modern armaments to Serbian officers previously trained

in her military academies—the panic extended to Berlin. France! What was she up to? . . .

After the victory, because of Austrian pressure, Serbia received less than the agreement among the four allies stipulated and she demanded rectification of the original terms. Bulgaria refused. Pashich proposed that the dispute be submitted for arbitration to the Russian tsar. The Bulgarian government, under King Ferdinand, a Hohenzollern, accepted the proposal, then—on the insistence of Austrian agents—suddenly ordered its troops to attack Serbian positions. This perfidy did not work. Serbia beat Bulgaria and came out of the Second Balkan War full of glory.

The Balkans' success in driving the Turks out of the peninsula at last avenged Kossovo, and all of Serbdom cried with joy.

Then came the dénouement.

The regions just liberated—Old Serbia and part of Macedonia—had been under Turkish rule for over five hundred years. The population was a mixture of races and religions: Serbians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Albanians, Turks, Armenians; Mohammedans, Jews, Greek-Orthodox, Bulgarian-Orthodox and Serbian-Orthodox. The people were illiterate; and physically and morally backward. The majority had been serfs on Turkish estates. They knew nothing about democracy and political life.

The Serbian army contended that the laws of Serbia should not be applied to these regions right away; instead, they should be organized into a military district and held in trust for the inhabitants until their educational level was raised to the point where they could digest political freedom and economic opportunity.

Nikola Pashich and his Radicals opposed this view. They saw in the backward provinces a field for political and economic exploitation. Pashich won; he had the complete support of Crown Prince Alexander—King Peter's son—and of the Russian minister.

All the administrative riff-raff—police officials, tax assessors and collectors, foresters: a hungry mob of carpetbaggers—swooped down upon Old Serbia and Macedonia. Their job was double: to extend the Radical Party's political stranglehold to newly acquired regions, and to extort for themselves whatever they could. By the end of 1913, bureaucracy, graft and police terror were so extreme that the "liberated" people regretted the departure of the Turks. The Serbian army on the whole would have nothing to do with the dirty work; the carpetbaggers worked with the special militia called the Chetniks,

organized eleven years before to harass the Turks and serve as an advance guard of liberation, but since used by Pashich for various reactionary purposes under the excuse of "protecting the state."

Wealthy Turkish landowners, dreading the wrath of the Christian rayah, had almost all fled with the Turkish army, and their vast estates could be had for a song. The peasants could not produce even a song. In order to reserve these lands for eventual distribution among the peasantry, the government—at the stubborn insistence of the army—issued an order prohibiting their sale. But the top-dogs did not let it apply to them. Nikola Pashich acquired three of the choicest estates and the other leading Radicals and Chetniks got theirs too.

The outraged army, led by Apis and his co-conspirators of 1903, threatened to overthrow the government. The opposition parties backed the army. Public opinion stormed against the carpetbaggers. And the Pashich government fell.

Now the question was: who would get the mandate to form a cabinet which would hold elections for a new parliament? The army, a majority of the parliament, and large sections of the populace in town and country demanded that the venal Radicals be kept out for good. But again Crown Prince Alexander and the Russian Minister Hartwig intervened. They exerted terrific pressure on King Peter to return Pashich to power. Hartwig indicated that if he were dropped, Serbia could no longer count on the support of Russia, which wanted a strong man in Belgrade on whom it could depend . . . and Peter was forced to yield.

Although this was entirely constitutional, Peter felt it was immoral. He abdicated in favor of Alexander, who became prince-regent.

What would have happened in Serbia had World War I not broken out in '14 is anybody's guess. The probability is that the Conspirators of 1903 would have pulled off another popular revolution. The war prevented it. But Alexander and Pashich did not forget the danger which had threatened them.

The Conspirators of 1903 were with few exceptions (Pera Zhivkovich, for one) men of extraordinary courage and the highest personal integrity. They were soldiers and national revolutionists; spiritual sons of Kralyevich Marko—only, unlike Marko in his day, they in theirs refused to compromise. There was no Turk over them; now the country was supposed to be free—but it wasn't. And men like Apis declined to accept this paradox. They knew whence the discrepancy stemmed, and to them the country's interests came before

the Crown's. Some were republicans. They belonged not only to the Black Hand but to the "Slavic South" organization, favoring, as I have told, a federation of South-Slavic republics. Others also, having killed a king to expiate the shame he brought on Serbia, had little respect for the institution of monarchy. Peter himself was another story. They would have died for him. He did not care about being a king, and so he was a good one. Serbia came first with him too.

The crown prince, Alexander Karageorgevich, was utterly unlike his father. Perhaps his biggest curse was a morbid ambition swimming in a pathological personality; the ambition of one who has suffered for years from an acute feeling of inferiority and who suddenly finds himself on top of the heap. As a boy he had endured humiliation in St. Petersburg. He knew that his position of page at the Imperial Court was an act of charity and he never forgave his father for being poor.

On Peter's accession to the throne his first son George automatically became crown prince. George was wild, brave, generous, adored by the people. Alexander suffered because of his brother's popularity. Officers referred to Alexander as "*Mali*—the Little One." He was nobody and would never be somebody unless something happened to George before he begot a son. Something did happen. Like his grand-uncle, Kara-George, who had killed his father in a fit of temper, George killed a servant.

George did not like Pashich, and perhaps the premier imagined that in a fit of temper George might pull out his beard and kick him out of Serbia. Anyhow, Pashich jumped at the excuse; he got the government to send George abroad "to take a cure," and Alexander became Heir Apparent. From his position as the second son of a debt-ridden exiled prince Alexander found himself on the way to the throne. Still he was not satisfied. He was neither liked nor feared. To the high-ranking officers he was still "Mali." Apis openly despised him. When in 1909, after Austria's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Apis reorganized the Black Hand, calling it "Union or Death!", Alexander donated a sum of money for its revolutionary work in Austria-Hungary and its activities against Turkey, and offered to become its patron. Apis accepted the money but not the patronage.

Nor did Pashich like or fear Alexander. But they both were afraid of the Black Hand. Fear and hatred made them a team. Pashich helped Alexander create his own secret army organization, the White Hand. The Black Hand, as has been shown, was a patriotic-revolutionary outfit; the White Hand was a clique of officers with an eye

to rapid promotions and other rewards through the favor of the future king-dictator. All who knew him well knew that if he lived Alexander would wind up as a dictator.

This—briefly—was the lineup in Serbia's internal politics when the fateful shots barked in Sarajevo.

Many forces gathered there to produce the incident that became the pretext for World War I. Some have already been mentioned: Austrian stupidity and misrule, Bosnian discontent, Trialism. Another was Apis' "Union or Death!" Black Hand organization.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, as in Croatia and Voyvodina, there were hundreds of conspiracies against the lives of tyrannical Austro-Hungarian officials. Apis did not take the group of which Gavrilo Princip was a part very seriously. Routine-fashion, he turned it over to Major Voyislav Yankovich, a man with a long komitadji-terrorist record, now head of the Black Hand assassination department, who provided the young Bosnians, including Princip, with guns and helped them across the border.

At that time Apis was chief of the Intelligence department of the Serbian army. As such, he knew that Serbia was not ready for war; also that Austria was looking for a pretext to attack his country. Contrary to some other writers on the subject, I do not believe that Apis expected the Princip group's plot to succeed.

But of course he was not opposed to its succeeding. The Dual Monarchy's crown prince had the impudence to visit Bosnia in order to witness the intimidating Austro-Hungarian manoeuvers on the Serbian border, and to schedule his official arrival in Sarajevo on *Vidovdan*, the day on which Serbians celebrate their agonized memory of Kossovo.

If Apis gave any thought to the possibility that something might happen to Franz Ferdinand in Bosnia, he could not imagine that a world war would be the result. A nationalist, he did not realize that Serbia and the Yugoslav Movement were connected to the whole world. In this he and his collaborators had something in common with the leading Western statesmen. Sir Edward Grey, the British foreign minister, for instance, believed for weeks after Sarajevo that there would be no war.

On July 25th Austria suddenly presented Serbia with an ultimatum to which she could not possibly yield. Austria (and Germany, working through Austria) wanted war. She declared it on the 28th.

In the next few days most of Europe was in flames.

The South-Slavs During World War I

DURING THE EARLY MONTHS OF WORLD WAR I, AFTER AN ALMOST fatal defeat in the opening Austrian assault, Serbia surpassed her military successes in the Balkan wars. The foremost hero of those wars, the grizzled sixty-seven-year-old Radomir Putnik, commanded her national army. A Serbian from Voyvodina, he bore the title of *Voyvoda* (marshal, leader) given only to officers who win decisive battles in the field.

The Austrian army was under Field Marshal Oskar Potiorek, who had been in the automobile with Archduke Franz Ferdinand when he was killed in Sarajevo. Early in August Potiorek thought his troops would roll over Serbia in no time. The equipment of these Balkanites was nothing compared to his, and their army had been decimated and disorganized by Austria's first attack. . . . But now all of a sudden, although he hurled division after division at the tiny "upstart" country, the Serbian positions held.

Vienna rushed large reinforcements, and Potiorek then slowly succeeded in driving the Serbian army back across the Sava and Drina, and penetrated deep into Serbian territory at several points. For every step it was forced to yield the bedraggled Serbian army took a heavy toll of Austrian lives. And on August 15th, Potiorek confessed in a message to the chief of the general staff in Vienna that his campaign was a matter of "*Furchtbare Hitze*—terrible heat" and heavy losses.

The heat of fighting increased with cooling autumn winds. But on December 2nd, the anniversary of the Emperor Franz Josef's accession to the throne, Potiorek finally took Belgrade.

Meantime the new Austrian crown prince, Archduke Karl Franz Josef, was discussing the future disposition of Serbia with Chief of the

General Staff Conrad von Hoetzendorf, who believed that the little country would be quite an addition to the Austrian realm. Its population was inferior of course, but it had considerable productive capacity. Its conquest was now but a matter of weeks; then all this nonsense about the "Yugoslav idea," or whatever the idiots called it, would end once and for all.

The Serbians did not even consider defeat. The junior officers, and the average soldier who had not had a chance to harvest his fields or in some instances even to don his uniform, had utter faith in Voyvoda Putnik's strategy, though he was ill, sometimes barely able to stand on his feet.

But they drew much of their inspiration from the aged King Peter, now no longer the ruler of Serbia. Ailing and unable to control his old man's cough, he stayed at the front with a rifle and bandoliers of ammunition over his shoulders and around his neck. His large and simple directness impressed and stirred the soldiers. One day when the Austrians attacked in overwhelming numbers and it seemed impossible that the Serbians could hold, the old man told them that if they wished to retreat he would release them from their oath of loyalty to him, but "I intend to stay here." His remark went up and down the line and everybody stayed and fought like hell.

Between battles soldiers and officers, from fourteen to the seventies, made and sang new pyesmé—like:

> O Drina's water, tragic frontier
> Between Serbia and Bosnia,
> The time is not far off, let us tell you
> When we shall cross over you,
> O Drina's waters, into Bosnia!

The shady politics which but a few months before had clawed at Serbia's innards were for the time being forgotten. Even Prince-Regent Alexander, in command of a part of the Drina front, set them aside and threw himself into the fighting. When Belgrade fell, he received instructions from Voyvoda Putnik for a counter-offensive. He had no reserves, not enough artillery shells for the sparsest kind of barrage; but he attacked, and threw back the Austrians.

Ten days after the fall of Belgrade Potiorek's forces were in full flight on all fronts, and on December 15th the communiqué of the Serbian High Command contained this sentence, triumphantly terse: "On the territory of the Kingdom of Serbia remains not one free enemy soldier."

The conflict lasted over four months and was decided in the battle of Kolubara which the Serbians won in spite of great odds. Years later the British official history of World War I stated: "Men still talk of the Miracle of the Marne, where there is little that is miraculous. There would be more justification in talking of the miracle of Kolubara."

It was after this battle that the significant conversation was supposed to have taken place between Chika Pera and the peasant who had lost his sixth and last son.

This new war, right on top of the Balkan wars, had completely disorganized Serbian life. Up to and including Kolubara there were more than a hundred thousand casualties, almost half the striking force. Most public buildings and many private houses were filled with wounded. There were acute shortages of doctors, medicines, food. Epidemics ravaged the country from end to end.

The Allied world, preoccupied with the blockade and with operations on the Western and Eastern fronts, scarcely realized what was happening in the Balkans. But people here and there in England and France and still neutral America, hearing rumors of epidemics in Serbia, began to collect relief money. Medical and ambulance organizations were sent over. They came late; but they did good work.

After Kolubara, Serbia had a ten months' respite.

In mid-December 1914 her parliament met at Nish and approved a declaration of the new coalition government that the country's foremost aim was "the liberation and union of all our Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian brothers not yet set free."

Then Serbia reorganized the remnants of her army. She got French and British promises of help, for the Central Powers were certain to attack her again. She was also menaced by Turkey, an ally of Austria and Germany, and Bulgaria, ruled by a Hohenzollern. After she got her second wind, she invaded Bosnia and almost captured Sarajevo. But——

General Erich von Falkenhayn, chief of the German general staff, took the Balkan problem out of Austrian hands and assumed personal charge. In accordance with the plan he formulated, Bulgaria attacked Serbia in mid-October 1915. He was taking no chances this time. Nineteen of the best available German and Austrian divisions were assigned to the Balkans under General von Mackensen, who had been successful on the Russian front.

Toward the end of October, Premier Pashich sent his last appeal

to France, Britain and Russia. He asked for "120,000 to 150,000 men within ten days." In spite of previous promises, which the Serbians were counting on, the Great Powers said they could give no aid. The situation on both Eastern and Western fronts hung in the balance. . . . Then there fell upon Serbia the disaster which John Clinton Adams describes in his fine book *Flight in Winter.*

The long-drawn, torturing retreat led Serbia's thinned-out national army through the Plain of Kossovo. On November 17th some of its units rested there in a blizzard for a few hours.

The enemy was just behind. "Oxen and horses swayed and sagged to the earth," John Clinton Adams summarizes the various French, English and American eyewitness reports. "Soldiers . . . tore the raw flesh from the animals before they were dead and swallowed it. Men, women and children, without coats, without shoes, blinded, separated from each other, wandered, stopped, knelt, lay down and disappeared. A young soldier dropped his rifle to carry a barefoot old woman. She disengaged herself, picked up his rifle, threw it at him, and cursing him with the terrible oaths of Serbia, pointed toward the sound of the cannon."

On November 25th the Serbian High Command addressed an order not only to the army but the people of Serbia: ". . . The only way out of this grave situation is a retreat to the Adriatic coast. There our army will be reorganized, furnished with food, arms, munitions, clothing and all other necessities which our allies will send us, and we shall again be a factor with which our enemies must reckon. The nation has not lost its being, it will continue to exist even though on foreign soil so long as the sovereign, the government and the army are there, no matter what the strength of the army may be. . . . Convince everyone that our retreat is a national necessity, the salvation of the state, and that in these tragic days our redemption lies in the fortitude, endurance and extreme self-sacrifice of us all. With faith in the final triumph of our allies, we must hold out to the end."

The land and most of the people of Serbia were conquered again. But a couple of hundred thousand Serbians, of whom perhaps a hundred thousand were troops, set out across the mountains. They meant to go to Montenegro, but meantime that country was conquered too, and they went on to Albania, then under uncertain Italian control. In the vanguard of the long straggly column of people, vehicles and animals was the government.

Somewhere near the middle, swathed in his great-coat, was King Peter. He insisted on walking as long as he could. But he grew so ill and weak that soldiers and officers took turns carrying him in a hay-

basket—their Chika Pera, personification of the best in Serbian life. He had not wanted to leave, and was reported to have said, "I want to die at Topola; I want to die in front of my church. When the Germans and Bulgarians come they will find only a deserted country and an old, dead king." And on December 2nd, apropos of Franz Josef's sixty-seventh anniversary as emperor, the Vienna *Reichspost* gloated over Peter, whom it saw "fleeing like a hunted animal in the solitude of the blinding, wild snowy wastes of a foreign land [while] around him hover the visions of his megalomania: arson against the Hapsburg Monarchy, the erection of a Serbian empire on the ruins of Austria-Hungary, Belgrade as the center of the entire Slavic South, the Karageorgeviches as the new, mighty dynasty of the Balkans. . . ."

The retreat covered hundreds of miles of mountain roads and trails in the worst possible weather. Tens of thousands died *en route.*

In Serbian territories which the Hapsburg forces occupied in the summer and autumn of '14 the Austrians had killed some boys in their early and middle teens. The Austrian explanation was that the youngsters were guerrillas; they had fired on the Imperial and Royal troops.

Similar incidents and explanations recurred in October-November '15 when the Austro-German-Bulgarian armies overran Serbia; and fear seized the people that the Shvaba might try to exterminate the nation by killing off all the young males. This led to a movement among mothers to send the boys along with their soldier brothers on the retreat over the Albanian mountains. The army wanted to cooperate, but in the general chaos of those days the matter got out of hand. Tens of thousands of lads with no one in charge of them filled the roads leading to Albania.

Months later the *New York Evening Sun* published a report on this phase of the retreat:

"When the frontier between Serbia and Albania was reached a gendarme told the boys to march straight ahead and, pointing to the west, he added that there they would find the sea and ships, and then left them.

"Without a leader or guide the boys crossed the frontier and marched through Albania in search of the sea and the ships which they hoped to find in a couple of days at the utmost. They were overtaken and passed by columns of old soldiers, armed, equipped, and officered, who gave them all the bread they had and encouraged them to follow.

"No one has described how long it took these boys to reach the sea, and how much they suffered from hunger, exposure, and fatigue. They ate roots and the bark of trees and yet they marched on toward the sea. At night they huddled together for warmth and slept on the snow, but many never awoke in the morning and every day the number decreased until when the column reached Valona only fifteen thousand were left out of the thirty thousand that crossed the frontier.

"It is useless to attempt a description of what they suffered, as the story of that march toward the sea and the ships is told and understood in a few words. Fifteen thousand died on the way and those who saw the sea and the ships 'had nothing human left of them but their eyes.' And such eyes!

"The Italians at Valona had no hospital accommodations for fifteen thousand. They could not possibly allow these Serbian boys covered with vermin and decimated by contagious diseases to enter the town. They had them encamped in the open country close to a river and gave them all the food they could spare, army biscuits and bully beef. The waters of the river had unfortunately been contaminated as corpses in an advanced state of decomposition had been thrown in, but the Serbian boy-soldiers drank all the same.

"By the time that the ship to convey them to Corfu arrived the fifteen thousand had been reduced to nine thousand. About two thousand more boys died during the twenty-four hours' journey between Valona and Vido, and thus only seven thousand reached the encampment in the grove of orange and olive trees by the sea on the island of Vido.

"The French and Serbian doctors attached to the encampment said that if it were possible to have a bed for each boy, an unlimited supply of milk, and a large staff of nurses, perhaps out of the seven thousand boys landed at Vido two thirds could be saved. There are no beds, no milk, no nurses at Vido, however; and despite the hard work of the doctors and their efforts to improvise a suitable diet, during the last month more than one hundred boys have died every day.

"As it is not possible to bury them on the island, a ship, the *St. Francis d'Assisi,* steams into the small port of Vido every morning and takes the hundred or more bodies out to sea for burial. The allied war vessels at Corfu lower their flags at half-mast, their crews are mustered on the deck with caps off, and their pickets present arms as the *St. Francis d'Assisi* steams by with her cargo of dead for burial in that sea toward which the boys were ordered to march.

"And the survivors lying on the straw waiting for their turn to die,

'with nothing human left of them but their eyes,' must wonder as they look at the sea and the ship with the bodies of their dead comrades on board whether this is the sea and the ship that the only leader they had, the Serbian gendarme that saw them safely to the frontier, alluded to when he raised his arm and pointed to the west and told them to march in that direction."

From Albania the Serbian refugees were to be evacuated to the island of Corfu which the Allies had selected as their refuge. The Italians and French were to furnish the shipping, and an English squadron was to assist in convoying. But the ships did not come; an Austrian flotilla turned up instead. Allied plans were changed and the Italians were assigned the task of evacuation.

They did not relish the job. They had never loved the South-Slavs —nor the South-Slavs them—and now the presence of the Serbian army in Albania, exhausted and almost unarmed though it was, greatly disturbed them. They considered it a threat to what they regarded as an Italian sphere of influence. This, coupled with shipping risks and epidemics, led to horrible episodes and to endless wrangling about the evacuation.

The British and French brought pressure on Italy. Russia sent her an ultimatum. The Italians demanded that the Serbians embark from a less vulnerable port than Durazzo, where they then were. In the end, the very old, the sick and dying were shipped from Durazzo, the others had to march on to Valona.

Though it was the easiest part of the journey, it must have seemed the worst to the Serbians, endless after the long retreat. Once they got there, however, the Italians complied with Franco-Russo-British demands and evacuated them with dispatch to Corfu where the Italian minister to Serbia, Count Carlo Sforza, was put "in diplomatic control"—to use the phrase in his biography in the *International Who's Who.*

The retreat received scant attention in the Allied press. The London *Times* gave it no editorial notice whatever. The Paris *Temps* praised the Serbians after they reached the sea, and assured them of complete emancipation after the war. There was also some talk in France of an expedition to Salonika.

For the next three years the headquarters of the Serbian government was on Corfu . . . and amid death and recovery the old chicanery of Pashich-Alexander politics reasserted itself.

Voyvoda Putnik had had a good look at the personal characters of the two men, and at their political machinations; and the old soldier was glad he was ill. He resigned from the Serbian army, which was his army more than any other one man's except Peter's, and he retired to Southern France. Although he lived for some years after the war, he never returned to Serbia, which had then become part of Yugoslavia.

Yet a miracle occurred on Corfu. With Allied aid, the surviving officers organized a new Serbian army of over a hundred thousand which in 1918 became the core of the Salonika front and in October and November of that year played the principal role in the liberation of Serbia.

In the meantime the life of the Croatians, Serbians and Slovenians in Austria-Hungary was no picnic either.

Immediately after the outbreak of the war all "political suspects" were imprisoned "in the interest of the safety of the state and its military operations." Among them were not only progressive nationalist *politiki*, but also—particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina—a great many Orthodox priests and teachers and students and other intellectuals, Catholic as well as Orthodox. Prisons overflowed into concentration camps. At the height of this terror (1914-'16) the number of South-Slavic political prisoners exceeded forty thousand. Perhaps ten thousand died of diseases contracted in prisons. Some five thousand were shot as hostages in retaliation for the anti-Austrian activity of others who had not been caught.

Immediately after Sarajevo, before the war began, all Serbian newspapers in the monarchy were stopped; in some instances through the destruction of their plants by Frankovtsi mobs. Later a severe censorship was established for all public prints. The Cyrillic alphabet was forbidden.

The provincial diets in Austria with Yugoslav representation were suspended. The Croatian Diet was reconvened in '15, but any free expression of opinion would have laid its members open to the charge of high treason. Besides, many of them were in prison.

There was no end to the high-treason cases before both civilian and military courts. In 1916 a Yugoslav refugee in London gave four thousand as the number of death sentences passed on Serbian and Croatian civilians in Austria.

Early in the war Austria-Hungary deprived of citizenship all subjects living abroad who were suspected of working against the

interests of the monarchy. Their properties were confiscated, their families deported.

Terrorism was worst in Bosnia—not only because Franz Ferdinand had been assassinated by a Bosnian, but because the anti-Hapsburg and pro-Serbian spirit was fiercest there. In a futile attempt to suppress it, between four and five thousand people were imprisoned, and 5260 families, mostly Orthodox, were deported to conquered Serbia and Montenegro.

The Orthodox clergy were severely persecuted. A decree of the Magyar-controlled government of Croatia suspended all the Orthodox parish priests of Slavonia and Srem, while in Bosnia scarcely one was left at liberty. Many were hanged; some in front of their churches.

Official Austrian records reveal that during the war the number of hangmen in the Dual Monarchy increased from two to ten. In October 1916 two Magyar papers reported that in Vienna the hangman's assistant, sentenced to ten days' imprisonment for being drunk and disorderly, obtained the remission of his sentence on the ground that his services could not be spared for so long a period.

In the spring of 1917 its own reign of terror scared official Austria. It provoked more Yugoslav and Czecho-Slovak spirit than it repressed. So in July Vienna declared an amnesty, released most political prisoners and restored a measure of free speech. Another motive for this was that there were secret negotiations between Vienna and Pashich for a separate peace.

From the Austrian angle, this was a mistake too. The separate peace of course was not realized, and the amnesty loosened Vienna's grip on its subjects. On October 19, '17 a deputy from Dalmatia, Dr. Anté Tresich-Pavichich, recently released from prison, excoriated in the Reichsrath the government's proceedings in Dalmatia and Bosnia, and denounced conditions in South-Slav prison camps elsewhere in the monarchy. The speech was suppressed—except in Zagreb, where excerpts were published evidently with the connivance of some local official who was Yugoslav-minded. The effect of Dr. Tresich-Pavichich's statements on public opinion was electrifying.

The information leaked out of Austria and when a summary appeared in the *Southern-Slav Bulletin*, published by Yugoslav exiles in London, it created a sensation there too. But after the war even more telling facts were revealed—such as that General Potiorek, the military governor of Bosnia, had signed thirty-five hundred death-warrants with his own hand in the name of His Imperial and Royal

Apostolic Catholic Majesty; and that at least a thousand other Bosnians had been shot down by soldiers or had perished by summary execution without the formality of a death-warrant. The victims were men, women and children. . . .

All this intensified the determination of the South-Slavs to secure their separation from the Hapsburg Empire.

On the reopening of the Vienna Reichsrath in May '17, the South-Slavic deputies took a decided line. Twenty-nine out of thirty-one organized themselves into the "Yugoslav Club" under the presidency of Anton Koroshets, the Slovenian Clerical, and on May 30th they demanded that all the provinces in the monarchy inhabited by Slovenians, Croatians and Serbians should be united under the Hapsburg Crown in a single autonomous and democratic state, free of all foreign domination.

The reference to the Crown was dictated merely by prudence, as was promptly recognized both by the South-Slavic and the German-Austrian press. The twenty-nine deputies didn't want to hang for high treason.

Close to a million South-Slavs were mobilized into the Austro-Hungarian armies. A good many served in them to the end of the war. Tens of thousands of Slovenians, Croatians and Serbians fought well against the Italians. One of their commanders was General Boroyevich, a Serbian from Lika. Italy had imperialistic designs on their territories. But many of the Austrian South-Slavs would not exert themselves to kill Serbians. They deserted to the "enemy" wherever they could. This was also true on the Russian front.

Specially frequent were mass desertions from Bosnian units. The First Bosnian Regiment, for instance, twice passed over *en bloc* and was twice reconstituted. Finally at Jassy it went over to the Russians with its Mohammedan-Serbian colonel at its head and, some accounts say, its band playing the Russian anthem.

In Russia a special corps was formed of 46,581 volunteers from among South-Slavic prisoners of war. It saw much service on the Russian front, suffering heavily in proportion to its numbers.

Toward the end of the war large contingents of South-Slavic volunteers from Austria-Hungary appeared on Corfu and later on the Salonika front to join the Serbian army. There were also nearly ten thousand returning Serbian emigrants from the United States, many

of whom left $12-a-day jobs in American war plants in order to help re-liberate Kossovo.

All through the war South-Slavic *politiki* who had escaped from Austria-Hungary were active in London and Paris and later in the United States. Among them were such distinguished men as Frano Supilo, a Croatian political leader known in all Allied capitals; Ivan Mestrovich, world-famous sculptor; Anté Trumbich, a leader of Dalmatian Croatians; Hinko Hinkovich, a renowned Croatian lawyer of Jewish faith; and Bogomil Voshnyak, a Slovenian liberal leader. They formed the Yugoslav Committee, which stood for the union of all South-Slavs within a free and independent state. They gradually established underground communications with the majority of the deputies in the provincial diets and the Reichsrath, and gained the nearly unanimous support of the Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian immigrants in North and South America.

In London they won the interest and sympathy of two eminent non-official Britishers, Professor R. W. Seton-Watson, Oxford historian, and Wickham Steed, foreign editor (later editor) of *The Times*.

The Yugoslav Committee's most serious difficulties came from the Serbian government.

On a trip to Russia in 1915, Frano Supilo learned of the secret Treaty of London which gave to Italy—in payment for joining the Allies instead of the Central Powers—the eastern Adriatic coast as far down as Split, Istria, Trieste, and a big stretch of Slovenian territory north of that harbor-city. This was critical. As a first step toward dealing with it, the Yugoslav group tried to obtain Allied recognition of their Committee as the official representative of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians in Austria-Hungary.

The big Allies were willing, but the government of Serbia was not visibly enthusiastic. True, at Nish, late in '14, it had favored "the liberation and union of all Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian brothers not yet set free"; but that was partly wartime politics against Austria. Pashich and Alexander were not always sure they wanted the Slovenians and Croatians. Possibly off and on they felt uneasy even about some of the Austro-Hungarian Serbians. All these groups were too democratically minded for their taste. They might complicate things too much. A "Greater Serbia," taking in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, southern Dalmatia, and Voyvodina would be simpler. . . .

This attitude of the Serbian government-in-exile—which meant Pashich and Alexander—had a profoundly confusing effect on the ideal of Yugoslav unity. When it and the provisions of the London Pact became known in Croatia and Slovenia, they discouraged people to whom Yugoslav unity was the only possible way out of an impossible situation.

All through 1915-'16 and most of '17 the Yugoslav Committee in London trembled in the balance. It looked more and more as if Slovenia, northern Dalmatia, the Croatian Littoral, and inland Croatia were going to be left to the mercy of Italian imperialism, which was as ambitious and aggressive in the "liberal aristocrat" Count Carlo Sforza as it was later under Mussolini. Tsarist Russia continued to back the "Greater Serbia" idea. Her ambassador in Rome had swallowed the Italian propaganda that Dalmatia was preponderantly Italian, and nobody could tell him that just the reverse was true.

The Yugoslav Committee could not understand Pashich's eagerness to cooperate with the Italians at the expense of the non-Serbian South-Slavic lands. It was partly a result of Sforza's expert diplomacy. The two became fast friends on Corfu, and in 1940 the Italian aristocrat published a highly complimentary study of the Serbian politician.

In the main, however, Pashich's game with Sforza was an inevitable corollary of his reactionary scheming with Alexander for a "strong" Serbian state which the two of them could manipulate as they saw fit, both in domestic affairs and in international power politics.

In April 1916 Pashich made a statement to the *Corriere della Sera* in which he "categorically" declared there was no disagreement between Serbia and Italy; that "we Serbians cannot deny the justice of Italy's aspirations to hegemony of the coasts of the Adriatic sea"; and that Serbia wanted only an economic access to the sea. The correspondent of that newspaper commented: "The merit of Mr. Pashich lies in the fact that he has accepted in the name of his country the view which the Yugoslav Committee in London has stubbornly and strenuously fought."

The South-Slavic immigrants in the United States, although they had no clear notion of what was going on in London and on Corfu, plumped for a "Yugoslav Republic—something like what we have here in America." The republican idea was particularly strong among Slovenian immigrants who collected money to help the "old country" achieve it in a free and independent tripartite state.

Unofficially, mainly through Steed and Seton-Watson who wrote extensively on the subject, Britain was inclined to favor the larger idea of the Yugoslav Committee, except that she meant to stick to the sellout of the Slovenian and Croatian regions under the provisions of the London Pact. Her motive probably was partly a reaction to tsarist Russia's approval of the "Greater Serbia" plan. The British tried to persuade Pashich to accept the idea of a Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian state, but got nowhere with him. He did not like the British. They had let Serbia down in the fall of 1915.

The British got nowhere with Pashich till after the Russian Revolution, which finished the tsars.

The Bolshevik uprising knocked the strongest prop from under Pashich and Alexander. And then, with hardly any effort at all the British—again chiefly Seton-Watson and Steed—brought Pashich partway round. Or so it appeared.

On July 20, '17, on Corfu, Premier Pashich of Serbia and President Anté Trumbich of the Yugoslav Committee signed the Corfu Declaration. It provided for the union of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians in a single, free and independent kingdom on a constitutional and democratic basis, under the Karageorgevich dynasty. Also for local autonomy in questions of resources and social and economic conditions, for the free exercise of religion, and for the maintenance of the two alphabets.

The Declaration did not name the regional units—Croatia, Montenegro, Herzegovina, Bosnia, Slovenia, Dalmatia, etc. That was a serious omission. Coupled with Pashich's well-known attitude, it made a gloomy impression on Croatians. Representatives of all political groups in the Zagreb Diet, except the Frankovtsi, joined in sending a confidential message to the Yugoslav Committee declaring that they found the Declaration difficult to accept. Croatians, they pointed out, had for centuries been told about their own state and their national rights; and they were reluctant to allow Croatia to drown in another state before obtaining her independence. They suggested the formation, if only for a month or a week or fifteen minutes, of a free, independent Croatia and a free, independent Slovenia which would then enter into a union with Serbia on an equal basis. This, they stressed, would satisfy the people, and gradually real unity would come about.

Slovenian leaders thought the same thing.

But Pashich felt the Declaration of Corfu had gone far enough. His unspoken thought was: too far. And the Yugoslav Committee,

afraid to risk a break with him in its anxiety for almost any kind of Yugoslav state, did not press the point.

Meantime, Prince-Regent Alexander was having his innings. One of his chief traits was to humble or destroy anyone who stood in his way or had ever slighted him. That included Pashich no less than Apis (now a colonel), for Pashich, the demagogue, still talked about The People and occasionally half believed what he was saying. He saw himself, of course, as the leader of The People, which implied that he and/or The People were more powerful than the king. This went contrary to Alexander's absolutist nature, which he had acquired at the Russian Court. But he needed Pashich in order to destroy Apis and his friends. And Pashich, for his part, needed Alexander. He knew from bitter experience with the Obrenovich dynasty that the king's power could be absolute only as long as the army remained loyal to the Crown; and since his own security was hitched to the Crown's, he was willing to cooperate with the prince-regent in the creation of a dependable officers' corps by eliminating the undependable element. This was the Apis group.

It was downright dangerous. The Pashich-Alexander view of it was accurate, even if distorted by fear. All Black-Handers favored a large state; many looked forward to a large *Yugoslav* state. Their motives were various. One was that in such a state the interplay of political balances would work against Pashich and Alexander, and for freedom, democracy and progress.

Having killed one king, they were not beyond killing Alexander; they had thought of it early in 1914; but they were not thinking of it in 1916 or '17 because they were sure the postwar Slavic world in the Balkans would be so complex and so insistent upon freedom and democracy that Pashich and Alexander would not have a chance.

But, fear-ridden, Pashich and Alexander decided to strike first, to check the rising tide of the national forces which had been pursuing them since '14 and which would affect their postwar position no matter what kind of state was set up.

Also, in the secret and very tentative negotiations for a separate peace between Serbia and Austria, the latter demanded the immediate liquidation of Apis and his associates on the charge that they were responsible for Sarajevo.

So in Salonika in 1917—when Serbia was under the heel of the enemy, when its people had no voice in their exiled government, when the Allies were ready to strike on that front and needed whatever

military talent was left in the Serbian army, and *after* the collapse of negotiations for a separate peace—the government of Serbia accused Apis and scores of his fellow Black Hand members of having attempted to assassinate the prince-regent. They were all arrested.

The witnesses against these officers, whose patriotism, integrity, bravery and competence had won them decorations in three wars, were the disreputable flotsam and jetsam that always drifts along with an army. Most of the cream of the country had perished or curdled in the recent terrible experience, and there was plenty of room for any kind of *mangup* (muckworm) that came along.

There is no doubt that Apis and his fellow Black-Handers were framed. The frame-up was hinted at during the comparatively free period in Yugoslavia, between 1920 and '28, when the case broke into parliament and the press. And in his book on the Dictatorship of King Alexander, published in Paris in '33, Svetozar Pribichevich supplied conclusive evidence. He reproduced a photostatic copy of a telegram sent by Pashich from Corfu to his Minister of Police in Salonika asking him to explain why the date they had selected as the day of the attempted assassination was no longer tenable. Had the attempt been made, Alexander would have known the date; so would the police; Pashich would not have had to ask any such question. The reproduced telegram is in the handwriting of Pashich's chief-of-cabinet, Filipovich. Its authenticity has never been disputed.

Apis and two of his closest friends and collaborators were executed. The other convicted officers, all members of the "Union or Death!" group, were sentenced to from ten to twenty years in prison with permanent loss of all civil rights. Alexander could have commuted the death sentence. The Yugoslav Committee in London and the French and British commanders at Salonika appealed to him to do so. He refused.

After the war he returned to Serbia, to Yugoslavia, master of the situation. Control of the army passed to his White Hand officers. He expected to have no difficulty with Pashich, even if the old fox kept on living much longer, for Pashich had not only participated in the frame-up, he had put it over practically single-handed.

Had Alexander returned to Serbia instead of to the new state of Yugoslavia, he could have become dictator then and there. But he did not give up the ambition. It took him ten years to realize it.

But this is ahead of the story. Few people in Yugoslavia really understood the Salonika Case till six or seven years after Apis was shot. Then it began to be referred to as the "Crime of Salonika."

All through 1917-'18 it was obvious to South-Slavic leaders in Austria-Hungary that the Hapsburg realm was falling apart. Franz Josef had died in 1916. The new emperor, Karl, with his ambitious wife, Zita, asked the Slovenian Clerical leader, Yanez Krek, if something could not be done to keep the Slovenians within whatever kind of Austria would remain after the war. The Slovenians were such fine people, such good Catholics, just like the Austrians themselves.

"Your Majesty," replied Krek, "it is too late."

The people of Croatia and Slovenia did not know the details of the cross-purposes between the Yugoslav Committee and the Serbian government, and popular Yugoslav demonstrations were more and more frequent. No terror could suppress them. Perhaps not even full knowledge of Pashich's politics would have inhibited them. The Austro-Hungarian South-Slavs had nowhere to go but into Yugoslavia.

On September 14th the Allies opened the offensive on the Salonika front. Twelve days later Bulgaria was suing for peace.

On October 4th Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey directed their peace feelers to Woodrow Wilson. Learning of this, the Yugoslav Club in the Reichsrath informed Vienna that it need not bother with the South-Slavs any longer.

On October 6th in Zagreb, the *Narodno Veché* (National Council) of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians was formed; the Veché, for short. It was declared the sole body authorized to represent the *former* Austro-Hungarian subjects of South-Slavic nationalities.

The Veché's program was simply "the unification of all Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians into a free and independent national state." Eventually a Central Committee was elected: Anton Koroshets, president; Svetozar Pribichevich, vice-president; and one Croatian vice-president whose name was Anté Pavelich but who was not the Anté Pavelich of '41-'43 nor any relation to him—both "Anté" and "Pavelich" are very common names in Croatia.

On October 29th the Croatian Diet in Zagreb, the only functioning Yugoslav parliamentary body, went on record as breaking all legal ties with Hungary and Austria and proclaiming a new sovereign state—the State of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians on these nations' territories which had formerly been part of Austria-Hungary. The Veché became the governing body of this new political organization.

The Armistice was still two weeks off.

Yugoslavia Is Created--Too Hastily

AFTER HE WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL VECHE late in October '18, the Reverend Anton Koroshets—then still a pretty good man, thanks to the recently deceased Yanez Krek's influence—hastened to Switzerland to confer with members of the Yugoslav Committee. He had a hard time getting in touch with them. Their moment was approaching, and they were beside themselves with worry about Nikola Pashich who was somewhere in Italy or Western Europe—doing what? No one knew: no one trusted him. The whiskery old reactionary, who through a conspiracy of historical circumstances held the key to the whole situation, sometimes seemed closer to Sforza, Sonnino and Orlando than to them. The London Pact would have been a tough nut to crack even if Pashich had been opposed to Italian imperial designs on Trieste and its hinterland and on Istria, the Croatian Coast and Dalmatia, which together meant more than a million people, of whom at least ninety-five percent were South-Slavs. But Pashich was unmistakably pro-Italian, and that made matters practically hopeless unless . . . unless they somehow got to the Peace Conference as a new power . . . unless they succeeded in getting close enough to the Serbian government to keep an eye on Pashich.

Koroshets was thinking the same desperate thoughts. There was no time to lose. The Allies had delegated Italy to work out an armistice with Austria. The advantage was all hers. She was bound to occupy great hunks of Yugoslav territory, and possession is nine points of the law. It would be next to impossible to dislodge the Italians once they got into Slovenian and Croatian territory—especially if official Serbia continued to side with them.

Of course there was Woodrow Wilson whose Fourteen Points were the hope of the age, who had lately recognized the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic and the justice of Yugoslav strivings for

liberty; and who, they knew, was incensed over the London Pact; but how to reach him? He was like a god from another world.

Finally, about November 1st in Geneva Koroshets did get together with some members of the Yugoslav Committee; not with its president, Anté Trumbich, however—he was dashing about trying to find Pashich. And in their growing desperation, on November 4th Koroshets and his Veché and Yugoslav Committee associates sent the Allies a note inviting their recognition of the Zagreb Veché as the *de facto* government of the ex-Austro-Hungarian South-Slavs. They further requested that the Yugoslavs be regarded as a group of allied peoples of whom the Serbians of Serbia were one. And, as a corollary, they asked that their volunteers throughout the Allied fronts be considered a separate fighting army—the Yugoslav army.

Koroshets, the chief signatory of the note, stressed the Veché's decision to unite into one state with Serbia and Montenegro all the one-time Austro-Hungarian lands inhabited by South-Slavs. Until that plan was realized, however, he begged the Western Allies to consider Dr. Anté Trumbich the Veché's envoy accredited to them.

Then on November 5th Pashich and Trumbich turned up in Geneva. The unhappy president of the Yugoslav Committee had finally located the elusive premier of Serbia. They were accompanied by a number of more or less anti-Pashich Serbian politicians, some of whom, nevertheless, were undoubtedly there to help Pashich give the Veché-Committee group the run-around.

Trumbich, seriously worried about the future, had a long talk with Koroshets, describing in detail the troubles the Committee had been having with Pashich, expressing grave and continued doubts about his intentions.

Koroshets then called on Pashich at the Hotel National. And Pashich told him that the idea of the Veché's accrediting an ambassador to London and/or Paris, on however temporary a basis, would not do at all. Serbia would represent all South-Slavs in foreign affairs. Koroshets balked. Then, as if on second thought, Pashich said he was ready to allow a commission of ex-Austro-Hungarian South-Slavs to attach itself in some way to the Serbian government as advisers.

The conversations continued the next day. Pashich repeated his suggestion of a Veché commission attached to the Serbian foreign office. Trumbich and Koroshets demanded first of all international recognition for the Veché and, second, that Serbia and the Veché create joint ministries to handle the affairs which were of vital

immediate concern both to Serbia and to the Yugoslav peoples of the former Dual Monarchy. For a time Pashich resisted.

At this point, as if following a scenario, the Serbian opposition *politichari* came into the picture with a great many proposals, some very sound. Pashich began to sense dangers ahead—these oppositionists and the ex-Austro-Hungarian Yugoslavs might unite: then where would he be? This, at least, is how Koroshets and Trumbich interpreted his action at the moment; and they, on their side, were disturbed by some of the over-centralistic proposals of a few of the anti-Pashich politicos.

At any rate, Pashich suddenly changed his attitude and went through all the motions of leaning toward the Koroshets-Trumbich idea. Now, too, an urgent request came from the French government: wouldn't they please expedite the resolution of the Yugoslav question?

On November 7th Pashich yielded completely. Or so it seemed.

On November 8th, as premier of Serbia, he addressed a note to the President of the National Veché saying that the Kingdom of Serbia recognized the Veché as the legal government of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians on the territory of the collapsed Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and that he had requested the governments of France, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States to do the same. Pashich agreed that Trumbich should represent the Veché in the Allied capitals until Serbia and the Veché got around to setting up joint ministries for foreign affairs, the army and navy, transportation, food, finance, etc.

This joint Serbian-Veché government was to have twelve ministers. Half of them, appointed by the current Serbian government, would be sworn in by the ruler of Serbia; to the other half, appointed by the Veché, their President would administer the oath. The twelve would govern together in fields which involved both Serbia and the Veché lands until the constitution was drafted and accepted; in all other fields Serbia and the Veché each retained sovereignty.

Why did Pashich go through the motions of recognizing at this late date—three days before the Armistice—the sovereign state of the Austro-Hungarian South-Slavs, a state which included Bosnia and Herzegovina? One explanation appeared in the last chapter: the Russian Revolution had deprived Pashich of his sole diplomatic support. Another reason was President Wilson's recent re-emphasis on the right of self-determination of small nations. This complicated Pashich's game; it was now impossible for him to strike an open

bargain with Italy at the expense of the Croatians and Slovenians. The need to cover his reactionary "Greater Serbia" tracks was going to require a lot of finesse.

His note recognizing the Veché as their legal government evoked tremendous enthusiasm in Zagreb, Lublyana and other South-Slavic centers in the former Austria-Hungary. It looked like first-rate statesmanship.

Austria-Hungary had folded up officially on November 3rd, signing an armistice with Italy; whereupon the Italians, triumphant after their endless defeats by Austrian regiments consisting largely of Croatians, Slovenians and Serbians from Lika, proceeded to occupy all the Yugoslav territories that international scoundrelism had secretly ceded to them in the London Pact. On November 8th Pashich joined Koroshets and Trumbich—upon their insistence—in addressing a protest against this occupation to the Allied governments. And the three men also sent a memorandum to the people's representatives in Montenegro (where the dynasty of old King Nikita was finished) expressing their wish for conversations which might lead to that country's inclusion into the new South-Slavic state.

This too looked like statesmanship.

But all these decisions and declarations weren't worth the paper they were written on. Nothing that transpired in the Hotel National at Geneva turned out to be real. Pashich thoroughly hoodwinked the Veché and the Committee. On November 9th Serbia and the Veché-Committee combination each selected six ministers for the joint temporary government. Historians subsequently referred to them as "hotel ministers"; they never became anything even faintly resembling a government.

Arriving in Paris on November 11th, Pashich cabled his government on Corfu all about the "Geneva Pact." However, when Koroshets and his colleagues reached Paris two days later they learned from the French Foreign Minister Pichon that all the Geneva decisions and measures had been cancelled. Why? What did this mean? The French statesman shrugged his shoulders.

What had happened was this: On Corfu there were at the time, besides Sforza or his representative, three reactionary Radical members of the Serbian government who, as Pashich knew they would, rejected the Geneva scheme on the ground that it betrayed a lack of faith in Serbia, and constituted an insult to her. In a huff they handed in their resignations. Among them was Milosh Trifunovich, destined to figure in the Yugoslav government-in-exile in '41-'43.

On November 16th in Paris, Pashich and the rest of the Serbian government resigned. Pashich immediately received a new mandate from Prince-Regent Alexander and organized a new government with a "coalition" front which was actually a hundred-percent anti-Veché. Then he leisurely waddled off to London.

Koroshets and the Yugoslav Committee were stunned. Koroshets became frantic to return home; but the French Foreign Office, apparently cooperating with the Pashich crew, held up his passport so that he did not get back till December 2nd.

By that time all kinds of things had happened in the Veché of which Koroshets, away in Geneva and Paris, had had no knowledge. They had happened under the leadership of Vice-President Svetozar Pribichevich, the Serbian leader of the Serbo-Croatian Coalition, who was acting president during Koroshets' absence and who had no real idea what had transpired in Geneva and Paris. Koroshets had dispatched daily bulletins to him through French and Serbian diplomatic channels, but the "channels" had instructions from Pashich not to forward them. Besides, Pribichevich was not sympathetic to the Trumbich-Koroshets point of view. He wanted the Austro-Hungarian South-Slavs to join Serbia at once without worrying about terms.

These events, along with much that follows, were told and retold from various points of view in innumerable newspaper articles, parliamentary debates, pamphlets and books published during Yugoslavia's "free period" between 1920 and '28. All of it appears in an objective little Slovenian book *Kako smo sé zedinili* (How We Were United) by Silvo Kranyets, published in '28. Also in *Yugoslovenski Odbor* (Yugoslav Committee) by the Czech writer Milada Pavlova, issued in Zagreb in '23. Pashich spent a small fortune buying up all copies of this book and getting the publisher to refrain from further editions, but he failed to get hold of at least one copy—it is in the United States.

Nikola Pashich's note of recognition on November 8th caused, as I say, an out-welling of enthusiasm in the new South-Slavic "state."

After the general Armistice was declared, there was for a few days a strong tendency to exultation anyhow. Austria was finished. True, Italy, which was worse than Austria, had taken Dalmatia, the Croatian Coast, Trieste and Gorizia; but now that all Yugoslav *politichari,* including Pashich, were working together, there might be a chance to send the Italians back to Italy where they belonged.

Save for some of the suspicious Croatian leaders, no one thought of questioning Pashich's sincerity. He was the prime minister of heroic Serbia. Even those who had known him to be an unrivalled sharper did not doubt him in this matter. They didn't see what else he could do now that he no longer had Russia behind him.

I have called Svetozar Pribichevich, now (in November) the Veché's acting president, a brilliant man. He was also honest, a terrific idealist; an effective speaker and polemical writer, an able editor; a worshipper in the powerful political cult of which the Kossovo and Kralyevich Marko pyesmé were the bible. All his life, as a *Prechanin*,* a descendant of Serbian refugees from Turkish oppression; as an intensely conscious South-Slav; as a leader, first of the Serbian Independent Democrats and later also of the Serbo-Croatian Coalition . . . always, always he had been looking forward to this moment. Now the moment had come; union with Serbia was inevitable; and the *prechanski* Serbians, because of their unique position in the South-Slavic world, were to have the privilege of leading the Croatians and Slovenians into the new state. When he learned of the "Geneva Pact," he opposed its provisions.

All the prechanski politicos in the Veché felt the same way, although some realized—as Pribichevich did not—that trouble was brewing with Pashich and his Radicals. No one questioned Alexander Karageorgevich. There was merely some vague uneasiness about the Salonika Case.

Some of the Croatians were a bit wary, as I say, but Pashich's note of November 8th sounded perfectly all right; besides, Koroshets and Trumbich were nobody's fools . . . and Svetozar's oratory swept them along.

Serbia proper was liberated again, but—

On returning to Belgrade, King Peter, now in his mid-seventies, retired completely from public life to brood and decline and eventually to die on an army cot without sheets, unattended except by his soldier servant. The last years of his life he refused to talk to his son, the prince-regent, who was in the saddle and whose gendarmes and Chetnik bands had seized "liberated" Montenegro and overrun it with a terror regime exactly as the carpetbaggers and the Chetniks had done in Old Serbia and Macedonia in 1913-'14.

*The word comes from "*preko ryeka*—across the rivers"; that is, Serbians who, escaping from Turk-occupied Serbia, had gone across one of the several rivers into Austria.

In Belgrade, suffering from years of extreme destitution under conquest or in exile, a lot of people joined in a terrific scramble for political and economic advantage. Many of the best people had died in the war (as always happens), many others had withdrawn in their pain (like Peter); and so some of the worst were the most successful in grabbing off fortune and power.

The Charshiya was in ferment. Tiny Serbia was about to be blown up into some sort of big state in which there would doubtless be new and great opportunities. The tsintsari, who had cooperated with Austro-German occupation, quivered with anticipation. The Chetnik voyvodé were in a great rush to re-form their units.

Also, by way of compensation for Serbia's recent horrible experiences, many Serbians talked of Belgrade as the city that would be "the Paris of the Balkans"—a sentiment excusable enough in itself, but which was apt to trick people into joining the tsintsari and Alexander and Pashich in their conscious or unconscious centralist and pan-Serbian orientation.

But beyond and above that was the whole Serbian background. Prewar Serbia was a comparatively simple state. It was composed almost entirely of Serbians. It had no minority problems. This homogeneity gave it a simple but fiercely nationalistic spirit, which made it difficult or impossible for most of the so-called leading and educated Serbians to make the psychological change that was needed in '18-'20. Many of them could not imagine the new state in which they would live as anything but an enlarged Serbia. The minority problem in Macedonia, for instance, was beyond them. The people there said they were Macedonians. To many Serbians that was absurd; they changed their designation to "Serbians." Some of them referred to Croatians as "Catholic Serbians." In Sarajevo in 1919 Pashich spoke of "Serbians of three religions." . . . Due to this mental lag, especially pronounced in its leadership, the politically dominant element in Serbia took an oversimplified view of a complex national-religious problem. The pan-Serbian ideology was the easiest approach to a solution: Let everybody be Serbian, then everything will be lovely. . . .

This attitude was not shared by the majority of Serbian peasants in Serbia. They were "uneducated," but more human than their leaders holding strategic positions in this interim period. Hardly anyone in Belgrade really represented them. Alexander Karageorgevich and the politicians and generals around him were closer to the Middle Ages than to the twentieth century.

But the wide-eyed Kossovo-cultists "across the rivers"—prechanski Serbians and Slovenians and some Croatians—who visited the historic city at the meeting-point of the Sava and the Danube saw none of these lags and trends which soon became the dominant forces in Yugoslavia. They noticed mostly the ruins left by the Austro-German armies, the maimed Serbian soldiers, the black-garbed mothers whose young sons had died on the retreat over the Albanian mountains, the Cathedral of St. Sava where King Peter had gone to pray after the Miracle of Kolubara. They saw the things that fitted into their Kossovo ideals.

Besides, drastic and dangerous events followed one another with compelling rapidity in the former Austro-Hungarian lands.

In mid-November the Italians had occupied the Slovenian towns of Logatets and Verhnika, both beyond the London Pact line; and everything pointed to their intention of penetrating to Lublyana and to the valuable coal mines at Terbovlyé. It is generally believed in Slovenia that the capital city and the mines were saved by sheer chance. A battalion of unarmed Serbian soldiers under the command of a Major Shvabich happened just then to enter Slovenia on its way home from captivity in Germany. Slovenian leaders asked the major to stop awhile. He stopped, found some arms in the old Austrian barracks in Lublyana; then marched to Verhnika. There, at the head of his battalion, he confronted the Italian colonel, commanding a regiment, and asked him if he preferred to retire to the Pact line or to fight. The Italian officer said there must be a mistake on his map. . . .

Almost identical incidents occurred on the Coast of Croatia. Serbian soldiers stopped the Italians; they saved the day.

At the same time the Magyars and the Austro-Germans were beginning to make military inroads on other South-Slavic territories. A young man named Peter Dobrovich (later a painter famous all over Europe whom I met in Dalmatia in '32) improvised a tiny republic in a Serbian-inhabited region in southern Hungary, declared himself president and formed an army, in order to stop the local Magyar raids. Parts of Slovenian Styria and Carinthia were saved from Austrian occupation by the action of a Slovenian named Maister who had been an Austrian general and still commanded some troops.

These developments were extremely disturbing to responsible people. As early as November 2nd the Veché had issued a general

mobilization order—with no result. Large sections of the population were hungry, physically exhausted, spiritually weary and torn, sick of war and everything connected with it. Too many people had too narrow an outlook at the crucial moment to be ready to sacrifice a few months of their lives for the construction of the new state. The mobilization order was an error; it should have been a patriotic recruiting appeal for volunteers.

Then toward the end of November another problem assumed serious proportions. For weeks bands of *Zeleni kadar*, the Green Corps, consisting of Croatian and Serbian deserters from the Hungarian army, had been emerging from the deep woods of Croatia and Slavonia. They had no central organization and no idea of what had happened the last month or so, except that Austria-Hungary was done for; that was fine. They had lived on roots and acorns and game for two or three years. Now they had a taste for something else; also arms; and, not unnaturally, some of these groups consisting of anywhere from three to thirty men manifested an inclination for banditry.

Here and there conditions came close to chaos. People threw stones at Austro-Hungarian signs on governmental office buildings. It gave them revolutionary satisfaction. Sometimes a stone hit a window; falling glass produced a wonderful sound—the old empire falling to pieces; so stones flew till all the "Imperial Royal" windows were broken. . . .

The crux of the situation was this: the old state with its hated authority had died; the new state, the new authority was not yet born.

News from Russia was exciting a great many workers, students, intellectuals, and some peasants. Lenin . . . *Revolutsia* . . . There was a sudden Communist scare.

All these trends, separately and together, worked against the original Trumbich-Koroshets statesmanship and favored the Pribichevich impulse to join Serbia as soon as possible, leaving the details to be worked out later.

In addition, prominent non-Serbian *politichari* favored a strong centralized state for long-range diplomatic-military purposes. A few of them were agents voicing the wishes of Britain and particularly France. Most English and French statesmen and generals knew almost nothing about the Croatians and Slovenians; what they did know was, thanks to Pashich and his envoys, largely unfavorable; and all of them, fearing Bolshevism and God knows what else,

could think only of Belgrade, of Serbia, as the region around which the other South-Slavs could organize.

Serbia began to be referred to as the *"sredishnyi dio*—central part" of the projected new Yugoslav state. There was a strong and practical basis for this. The most effective force against Italian aggression were Serbian battalions. One of them seized and held Fiume. The Serbian soldier had an inherited "sense of the state." Unlike the Croatian and the Slovenian, he had served in the army of his own country for several generations. He had won and lost battles which were his battles. That had given him an inner discipline which was especially strong in crises.

In mid-November, two weeks before Koroshets managed to return from Paris, the pan-Serbians in the Serbian cabinet received word from their agents in Zagreb that Koroshets and Trumbich no longer represented the sentiment of the Veché. One of these agents was Colonel Dushan Simovich (whose name flashed in the headlines on the fateful March 27, '41 as the leader of the alleged anti-appeasement uprising in Yugoslavia).

The agents were correct. Voyvodina and Bosnia and Herzegovina, sending their own representatives to Belgrade, were about to take matters out of the hands of the Veché in Zagreb. So on November 24th, while Koroshets and Trumbich were tearing their hair in Paris, the Veché in Zagreb, under the chairmanship of Pribichevich, and speaking for all the ex-Austro-Hungarian South-Slavs, came out for a "united state with Serbia and Montenegro." It did not worry about who should temporarily represent the Veché lands in foreign capitals. It appointed a delegation of twenty-eight representing all parties, except the Frankovtsi, to meet without delay the representatives of Serbia and Montenegro for the purpose of organizing . . . right away . . . as soon as possible . . . a provisional government until the Constituent Assembly of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians could choose the form of government for the new state and adopt a Constitution by a two-thirds majority. On the insistence of a few Croatians and Slovenians, mostly Socialists and peasant leaders, the right to choose between a monarchy and a republic was specifically reserved for the Constituent Assembly.

What little was left of the Frankovtsi organization voluntarily disbanded. This was the only group in the South-Slavic provinces of the deceased Austria-Hungary which refused to participate in the work of creating a common Yugoslav state. All others accepted

the idea of Yugoslav entity. But they differed concerning the organization of the state.

On November 28th the Veché delegation, headed by Acting President Svetozar Pribichevich, was grandly received in Belgrade. At the depot, choral societies sang Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian hymns; from the windows of Prince-Regent Alexander's temporary residence hung the flags of all three nations. It was a wonderful day.

The delegation elected an executive committee of three, including Pribichevich, which then went into session with the representatives of the Serbian government. These were practical, hard-boiled politicians who had no difficulty in persuading the Veché's trio to drop much of the program they had outlined in Zagreb on the 25th. The new state would be a monarchy called *Drzhava Serba, Hrovata i Slovenatsa—SHS,* for short—the State of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians; and there must be no further talk of a republic. This meant that the forthcoming Constituent Assembly would have nothing to say about the form of the new state. The Veché executive committee also yielded on the adoption of a new constitution. A majority instead of two-thirds would carry it.

At eight o'clock in the evening of December 1, 1918, South-Slavic history came to a climax. Prince-Regent Alexander, flanked by three members of the Serbian government and his highest ranking general, received the Veché delegation. Its appointed spokesman, a Croatian, delivered the address previously agreed upon by the Veché group and the representatives of the Serbian government. It emphasized freedom and democracy, the desirability of autonomous developments wherever consistent with the interest of the new state as a whole, and the Wilsonian principle of national self-determination.

"Faithful to the example of and the advice given me by my august father," responded Prince Alexander, "I shall be king only of free citizens of the State of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians, and I shall always remain true to the constitutional, parliamentary . . . principles based upon universal suffrage." He promised to exert all his powers to insure boundaries for the new state which would be consistent with the nationality of regions adjacent to other countries. He expressed his trust in the Allies and in the great principles for which they had shed so much blood. "I hope," he continued, "that those principles will be adhered to also by Italy, for her very existence rests on them as enunciated and interpreted by her greatest sons of the last century. I say freely that by respecting those principles,

and thus winning the friendship and neighborly spirit of our people, the Italian nation will profit more than by pressing the London Pact, which we did not sign, which was signed by others at a time when there was no thought of the collapse of Austria-Hungary, and which we have not recognized. . . ."

The future proved that so far as Alexander was concerned his response was just so many words.

The last few sentences of the prince-regent's address were insisted upon by the Veché's executive committee.

These sentences did not worry official Italy. At Versailles, Premier Orlando and Foreign Minister Sonnino stuck to the London Pact in the face of Wilson's extreme opposition. They threatened the Allied leaders with a Communist upheaval in Italy unless her borders were expanded. Their purpose was to postpone the question till after 1920, when Wilson would be out of office; and they won their point. The Yugoslav delegation at the Peace Conference, headed by Pashich, put up no real fight about the matter. Clemenceau and Lloyd George didn't care a hang. It was left to Italy and Yugoslavia.

The question of Trieste and Gorizia and Istria was never brought to a clear issue; Italy simply took and held them, acquiring over half a million Slavic subjects. Dalmatia and the Coast of Croatia were left dangling.

In June 1920 Nikola Pashich's friend Carlo Sforza became the Italian foreign minister presumably in order to take care of Yugoslavia. He had established a firm relationship also with Momchilo Ninchich, Pashich's man in the foreign office in Belgrade; and when later that year Italy and the Yugoslav State sat down to the conference at Rapallo, Sforza was in much closer touch with the Belgrade government than was Anté Trumbich, the Yugoslav foreign minister and head of the Yugoslav delegation. Trumbich's passionate purpose was to get Italy out of the Balkans; but he only partly succeeded. The points on which he would compromise if he must were relayed to Sforza by someone in the Belgrade foreign office. The result was that, in addition to d'Annunzio's subsequent seizure of Fiume, Italy retained the city of Zara, some Dalmatian islands, Istria, Trieste and the large Slovenian region soon to be named the Julian March. And Pashich and Ninchich, especially the latter, became greater men in Italy than they had ever been in Yugoslavia. Their renown there extended into the Fascist period.

After the signing of the Treaty of Rapallo on November 27, '20,

Foreign Minister Sforza spoke in the Chamber of Deputies in Rome in his best aristocratic manner: "Love of our country must not mean contempt for the national sentiment of another race, even if that race is younger and has a less glorious history than ours. . . . We have had [!] to receive into our bosom hundreds of thousands of Slavs. To those Slavs . . . we shall assure the most ample freedom of language and culture; we regard this as a pledge of honor as well as an act of political wisdom."

Thus spake the count. But Italy with its glorious history did not wait for his exit from the government before its official representatives in Slovenian and Croatian communities were elaborating a terroristic program which Mussolini and his Fascismo later developed still further. The program was scathingly denounced by Professor Gaetano Salvemini of Harvard, an Italian liberal and anti-Fascist, in his pamphlet *Racial Minorities Under Fascism in Italy*, published in Chicago in '34.

Yet, as Italian persecution against the Yugoslavs surpassed itself year after year, the Belgrade foreign office, nearly always under the control of the Radicals or their pan-Serbian equivalent, never made any sort of protest above a polite murmur in the League of Nations. In '24 the Pashich-Ninchich group in the government led Yugoslavia into a friendship pact with Mussolini's Italy, which was the same as saying that the Fascists could go on terrorizing their six hundred thousand Yugoslavs.

Why? The Pashiches and Ninchiches were not interested in the Adriatic coast; it was Catholic. The Aegean Sea interested them much more. And they preferred the Slovenians and Croatians to remain as weak as possible. If they developed commercially through easy access to the sea, it would be disadvantageous to the chauvinist-Serbian idea. That a strong Slovenia and Croatia might be good for Yugoslavia left the Pashiches and Ninchiches cold. They wanted a "Yugoslavia" which would be a Greater Serbia in which the Croatians and Slovenians would either have to turn into Serbians or be treated as subject peoples. The Pashiches and Ninchiches were not in the least interested in a free state with all manner of possibilities—they might not remain top-dog. They were the self-appointed guardians of Serbdom, the great values of the Serbian people, the glory and tragedy that was Serbia; but they had as little relation to those values and that glory and tragedy as some bishops or high priests have to the religions they formally represent

But to return a little—

On December 1, 1918, began the State of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians that eventually acquired the shorter popular name of Yugoslavia. The map below shows its shape and composition.

Its total area was 96,637 square miles—slightly larger than Oregon, slightly smaller than Wyoming or Colorado; almost as large as

From Obzor Spomen-Knjiga, 1860-1935, Zagreb, Croatia

The Yugoslav State—Status of Its Territories Before 1918

Hungary and Czechoslovakia together—one of the biggest "small countries" in Europe.

The population in 1918 was over thirteen million; sixteen million in '40. Of this latter figure, fifteen and a half million were Slavs; the other half million was divided among various minorities: a few tens of thousands each of Germans, Italians, Albanians, Greeks, Turks, Rumanians, Magyars.

Serbians formed slightly over half the population, comprising nearly all the Slavs of the Orthodox faith. Then came the Croatians,

including the Dalmatians, who numbered four and a half million in '40. And the Slovenians, the smallest Slavic nation, totaled in Yugoslavia some 1,300,000. Besides the half million Slovenians in Italy, approximately eighty thousand of them remained in Austria.

A varied country, its resources were still largely undeveloped. Climatically and in terrain, parts of it were miniatures of Kansas, New England, Colorado, Arizona, California. It was mountainous, but there were great valleys, spacious plains with good soil. There were rivers running east and south, some partially navigable. One of them, the Sava, had its source in the Triglav region in Slovenia, ran through the length of Croatia and emptied into the Danube in Serbia—which poets saw as a symbol of Yugoslav unity.

About one-third of the country was in forests, mostly oak and pine and fir and spruce, some practically virgin. And there was much coal and iron, some copper and zinc, antimony and chrome, a little lead, silver and gold.

The railroad and highway systems were none too good. Some phases of the people's life had never been ordered, and in 1918 there was much social and economic dislocation. Also a good deal of illiteracy. There were hundreds of thousands of cases of typhoid fever, malaria, pellagra, trachoma, and other diseases due to poverty, neglect and disorganization. There was much typhus in Old Serbia, Macedonia, and the Dalmatian Highlands. And, as already suggested, there was much general exhaustion from the war and enemy occupation and oppression under Austria. There was some incipient hoodlumism. . . .

But, most important, there was a great body of humanity—Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian; Orthodox and Catholic, Moslem and Jewish—that was sound, tough-fibered, not yet functioning very much on any creative level, but immensely eager for a new deal, for fundamental social, economic and political adjustments, and ready to work hard to achieve them.

Largely owing to the inevitably too-hasty beginning of the country, however, the wrong kind of leadership got to the top, a leadership which did not perceive that here was a chance for a miracle. Whether old or new, too many leaders, being educated and "civilized," still had contempt, conscious or unconscious, for the somewhat primitive peasant masses which formed eighty percent of the population. They could not see that the peasants were the country's greatest resource. The eyes of many pushing their way to the top were too sharply

centered upon their own "main chance" to be able to see anything else.

There were potential Thomas Masaryks in the new Yugoslav State, but everything right from the first was against them. They would have to punch their way through trickery and corruption: and Masaryks don't do that. They are gentlemen. They get ahead only if circumstances favor them, if they happen to get the jump on the rough boys.

Only one man, Dr. Andriya Stampar—"Doctor Hercules"—an idealist, was tough enough, brutal enough, pig-headed enough, heedless enough of his own interests, able enough as an organizer, to fight his way to a point from which he then could launch his great action (with the financial support of the Rockefeller Foundation) against the ravages of disease. And even he was defeated just as he got going.

Herculeses were needed also in economics, in politics, in religion, in education, in literature. The near-Herculeses who appeared did not get very far. As I shall tell in the next chapter, some were shot dead in their tracks.

A big idea was needed; none appeared. There was no idea anywhere in Western and Central Europe; only fear. And Yugoslavia leaned on the West. The most that those on top in the new state could think of was to maintain it defensively against its foreign enemies, of whom there were many, and against those inside the country who wanted to change its political form and who were promptly charged with aiding those foreign enemies. The Belgrade ruling group was among the first in Europe to use the phrase "enemy of the state," which included not only the Communists but everybody who drastically opposed the *status quo*. Gradually the phrase came to mean anybody who was antagonistic to the regime in power. . . . So the perceptible processes of the country's life were negative. Or so erratic and sporadic that they had no future.

The nationalist revolution, helped by the war, wrecked the Austrian empire. The formation of Yugoslavia, however, was not revolutionary in itself. In fact, its government turned out to be counter-revolutionary.

Now that the three peoples were finally together, a revolution was needed—a *social* revolution. Large sections of the people wanted it whether they knew it or not. But the leaders who had brought on the collapse of Austria were not ready for it. They were merely nationalists, which was not enough. Many ordinary people were

way ahead of them. Some of the leaders, especially Prince-Regent Alexander, because of their own narrow view and because they were part of a sick, fear-ridden, defensively organized Europe, trampled the impulse of the people. And in doing so they thought they were patriots. A few knew in their hearts they were only gangsters in the direct or indirect employ of a dying order.

A Peasant Leader Emerges: Stepan Radich

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING POLITICAL LEADERS IN THE EARLY years of the Yugoslav state was Stepan Radich, a Croatian, who in '95 had organized the group of university students that welcomed Franz Josef to Zagreb by burning the Magyar flag, and had then gone to Prague and come under the influence of Masaryk.

Of peasant stock, Stepan Radich owned a bookstore in Zagreb which was an informal headquarters of different movements that popped up and petered out under Hungarian rule. Some of the movements seemed pretty cracked; and people sure of their own good sense refused to take Radich seriously. He was honest and not hidebound, and he was trying out all the possible approaches to the tangled South-Slavic problem. On the whole he was saner than the sensible, realistic intelligentsia. He published simply written books and peddled them in the villages where, in spite of Magyar obstacles, education was making inroads on peasant illiteracy.

When the war ended Stepan was known as the leader of a politically undefined peasant movement. He had made idiotically frank statements in the Diet. He had played along with the Serbo-Croatian Coalition one minute and, following some sudden hunch, whooped for Franz Josef the next. In 1903 he had greeted Peter Karageorgevich as the king not only of the Serbians but of the Yugoslavs; in '14 he called Peter names. He was a curious man, apparently unstable and irresponsible. However, he had a keen instinctive intelligence; and though he was likely to blunder from day to day, he stuck to the main line from year to year.

He had a squeaky voice with no appeal, but he could go on endlessly; once he spoke for eighteen hours without pause. When he finished speaking, intellectual listeners usually had no idea what it

was all about. It was different with peasants. Perhaps they sensed his sincerity and knew that he was for them. They trusted him almost blindly.

He had a personality no one could overlook, and a mission in life. He was near-sighted, almost blind, but that was probably an advantage. It kept him from seeing all sorts of things, from losing the forest in the trees. He did not notice "sane" people shake their heads at the mention of his name.

Radich was in the Zagreb Veché from the start. He did not share Svetozar Pribichevich's attitude toward Serbia as the "central part." He felt the cult of Kossovo was tricking the prechanski Serbians into a grave future blunder. He had scant regard for Alexander. He distrusted Nikola Pashich. He was all for a Yugoslav State, but he had his own ideas about its form. The word "*republika*" rumbled in his huge, round cranium.

At the momentous November 24th meeting of the Veché, Radich joined the Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian Socialists in insisting that the Constituent Assembly should have the power to decide whether the new state would be a monarchy or a republic. He was one of the twenty-eight delegates elected to meet with the representatives of Serbia, but he was not in favor of rushing to Belgrade right away. He was the only one who voted against it.

Republika . . . the oftener he said the word the better it sounded.

Radich felt the solemn ceremony with Alexander Karageorgevich in the evening of December 1st was a mistake. He announced then and there, on December 1, '18, the creation of the Croatian Republican Peasant Party.

Official Belgrade and the Charshiya promptly disapproved. But the usually unresponsive Croatian peasants and the little people in Zagreb and the smaller towns just as promptly backed him up.

Republika . . . federatsiya—

Since almost all the leaders of the political parties in Serbia favored the monarchy and the centralization of power in Belgrade, they too opposed the movement. The democrats as well as the Ninchiches and Pashiches felt that Serbia the "Yugoslav Piedmont," *had* to be the "central part" and a monarchy.

At the same time, the prechanski Serbians, having finally attained freedom, wanted to press everybody—Croatian, Slovenian, Moslem, Montenegrin—to their happy bosom. And they thought this could best be done in a centralized form of government. Unlike the Croatians, the prechanski Serbians had never dreamed of a separate state.

They had just dreamed of a Serbia in which they would be included. Now here was a big Yugoslav State, which was even better; but they applied their old thinking and feeling to it. There was nothing to fear from Serbia—or so they thought in 1918.

They were poor politicians. As a matter of fact, Svetozar Pribichevich and all the others were no politicians at all. Under Austria-Hungary they had been politically united against the Austrians and Magyars, just as all Serbians under Turkey had been united in the anti-Turkish party. During the last half of the nineteenth century, however, while in Serbia the top politicos, feeling their oats and learning the ropes, split over the Karageorgevich-Obrenovich rivalry and into Radicals, Liberals and Progressives, the Prechani were still largely united in the same uncomplicated and mainly negative anti-Austrian, anti-Magyar party. And during the war, while the Prechani pined for freedom in Hapsburg jails, the serbiyanski politicians on Corfu were making full use of their acumen, figuring out ways of excluding other Serbian leaders, through liquidation if necessary, in order to keep their own Radical party—themselves—in power. They were post-graduates of a political school as tough as any in the world. Tammany Hall leaders in their prime were sophomores compared to Nikola Pashich. What chance did the Prechani have who had not yet even enrolled!

Elections to the Constituent Assembly were held on November 28, '20. More than one and a half million people went to the polls—an amazing number for a country of thirteen millions with almost no experience in political democracy. The people voted on the issue of centralization and for or against the elimination of the ancient historical entities—Croatia, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Slovenia, Montenegro. The voting was by secret ballot, and the ruling group in Belgrade and its supporters in the former Austro-Hungarian lands were defeated on the issue of centralization. Had there been any intention of following democratic principles, here was a clear mandate from the people.

The Democratic Party received 319,000 votes.

The Radical Party of Nikola Pashich—285,000.

Radich's Croatian Peasant Party—230,000.

The Communists—190,000 and the Socialists—53,000.

The Agrarians—152,000, and the Slovenian Clericals and Bosnian Moslems about 100,000 each.

The Democratic Party, the strongest, had been formed in 1919. Into it had gone Pribichevich's Independent Serbians and two sizable

democratic groups in Serbia proper headed by Lubomir Davidovich and Milorad Drashkovich. Voting for the Democratic candidates in this election were the Prechani and a mixture of Pashich's opponents in Serbia, and also the Croatian and Slovenian intellectuals who believed that unity could be accomplished best and quickest through a centralist form of government. The Democratic Party's parliamentary representatives came from every section of Yugoslavia.

The second strongest party was Pashich's, representing the vested interests of the Charshiya under the cloak of "serving" Serbia.

Radich's strength amazed everybody. He began to be recognized by his opponents as a great demagogue.

But the appearance of fifty-eight Communist representatives with almost two hundred thousand voters behind them rocked the conservative elements and stunned Prince-Regent Alexander, whose hatred of Bolshevism bordered on insanity. The Communist Party, anti-centralist of course, carried the county of Belgrade! It piled up a big vote in Zagreb. It won a majority in many smaller industrial cities and in Montenegro and Macedonia.

The Agrarians, Clericals and Moslems with over four hundred thousand votes also opposed centralization.

Thus two preponderantly Serbian groups—the Radicals and the Democrats, with six hundred thousand votes—were confronted by a heterogeneous array of parties representing over eight hundred thousand. In general, the Democratic leaders had nothing in common with the Radicals save centralism, but they knew what they wanted at the moment, and they were quick to learn how to get it. The two groups were in power and the prince-regent, who became king in '21, was with them.

Stepan Radich and his fifty delegates refused to take part in the deliberations of the Assembly because it was not allowed to decide on the form of the state—to him a question of greatest importance. This reduced the number of delegates from 419 to 369. The Radicals and Democrats had 183—a bare majority. And as the Assembly got to work on a Constitution it became obvious that most of the leaders of the large Serbian parties on both sides of the rivers were determined to impose their will upon the rest of the country. Toward the end of the convention, dissatisfaction seized even a few of their own delegates, so that the centralists were unable to obtain even a bare majority for their draft. The fifty-eight Communists were against it *en bloc*.

But Pashich was a resourceful old dog. At the convention were

seven members whose party, representing Turkish and Albanian minorities in South Serbia, went under the name of *Djemiyet*. With the support of this group the necessary majority was obtained and the Constitution was adopted on June 28, '21, on *Vidov dan*—the 532nd anniversary of the Battle of Kossovo.

Its main provisions were as follows:

1. The Kingdom of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians was a constitutional-parliamentary monarchy.

2. The Karageorgeviches were the hereditary dynasty of the country under the principle of primogeniture.

3. The *Skupshtina* or parliament was elected on the basis of general suffrage and proportional representation.

4. Both king and parliament had the power of initiating legislation and the king had the power of sanction.

5. There was to be freedom of speech, religion, assembly and the press.

6. The term of the Skupshtina was four years. The king could dismiss it at any time, but new elections were required within three months and the new parliament had to convene within four months after the old parliament had been dismissed.

7. Skupshtina members were responsible only to the body as a whole, which represented the people.

8. Higher judges were appointed for life and could be dismissed only for violation of the laws of the state.

9. Local government—of districts and townships—was semi-autonomous under over-all control of the central authority of the state.

10. Important finances were in the hands of the government, but the Skupshtina was to approve the budget.

11. Initiative for amending the Constitution could come either from the king or from the Skupshtina. In the latter case, consent of three-fifths of its membership was necessary; whereupon parliament was dismissed and the new parliament accepted or rejected the suggested amendments by a majority.

On paper the constitution looked liberal. It provided for sound economic and cultural institutions. Had King Alexander been willing to serve the country as a constitutional monarch, the peoples of Yugoslavia could have gradually ironed out their differences and created a democratic state in spite of the over-hasty beginning. But Alexander was not willing. It was not in his nature. In addition to that, on the day he swore before the parliament that he would govern in

accordance with the new constitution, the Communists made an attempt on his life.

The Communist Party was immediately outlawed. Its deputies in parliament were unseated. The illegalization was carried out by Democrat Drashkovich, whereupon he was assassinated. Then the government pushed through the law for the safety of the state, which was put into effect—drastically—by Democrat Pribichevich in his capacity as minister of the interior (nine years later he himself was persecuted under the provisions of that law). . . .

Thus in its first official exercise Yugoslav democracy received a serious check. It was a discouraging omen for the future.

On the surface the constitutional struggle in Yugoslavia looked like a Serbo-Croatian conflict. This exactly suited Pashich and Alexander. As long as most Serbians stuck together they could fight the Croatians as "enemies of the state." They could invoke the law for the safety of the state with which they had "destroyed" (really driven underground) the Communist Party. If necessary they could accuse the Croatian Peasant Party of Communism—although by now it had dropped the "Republican" part of its name.

Stepan Radich refused to recognize the king and the Constitution. Neither had been approved by a majority of the people's representatives; therefore both were illegal. He went on a long trip—to London —to Moscow, where he greatly interested Lenin.

His refusal did not worry Nikola Pashich in the least. On the contrary, it helped him. It turned Pribichevich and his Prechani—whose first thought was the continuance and safety of the state—into Radich's bitter enemies. This all but solidified the Serbian front against the Croatians. There were only a few Serbian politicians of any prestige who opposed centralism.

Belgrade misrule touched the Croatian individual very closely and Radich had no end of material for what the regimists called his "demagogy." While he was traveling in Russia, visiting "Uncle Ivan," his already legendary popularity among the plain people grew by leaps and bounds.

Radich followed a policy of passive resistance which the Croatian peasant, who had had centuries of practice, understood perfectly. The Croatian Peasant Party refrained from sitting in the Skupshtina.

Then Radich came home from Russia . . . and in March '24, with half a million votes behind him, he ordered the seventy Croatian Peasant Party deputies to take their seats in the Skupshtina.

The government at the moment was almost exclusively Radical. Nikola Pashich was premier; Momchilo Ninchich, foreign minister; Milan Stoyadinovich, finance minister; Milan Sershkich, minister of forests and mines; and Dragutin Koyich, minister of commerce. All were Serbian ultra-chauvinists and the last three subsequently formed the main props of Alexander's dictatorial regime. For the first time the government did not include a single Croatian or Slovenian. It had only 108 supporters in the parliament.

When Radich's seventy Croatian deputies—many of them plain peasants—arrived in the capital, Belgrade's upper circle threw up its hands in consternation. Now with Radich's support any party in parliament could overthrow Pashich.

Pashich, the Charshiya and the Court feared an alliance between Radich and the Democratic Party or one of its factions. They feared it because Radich and the Democrats were financially incorruptible. Had they combined forces, they could have struck the Charshiya a lightning blow.

Davidovich desired coalition with Radich. Pribichevich strenuously opposed it on the ground that Radich had not yet recognized the state, the king and the Constitution; and—to his deepest regret soon after—Pribichevich formed a coalition with Pashich. It was called the P-P government.

New elections were held on February 8, '25. But before that the law for the safety of the state was invoked against Radich; he was accused of high treason and imprisoned.

The P-P coalition received 1,040,000 votes and 142 seats in the Skupshtina. Radich's party received 532,000 votes and sixty-seven seats. All anti-government parties combined had 151 members out of a total of 294. The government did not have a majority, but it had one more trick up its sleeve.

Declaring the whole Radich party anti-state, it asked the parliament to annul the mandates of its leaders. No sooner was the request made, however, than the agile Radich turned a somersault in his prison cell and announced that the Croatian Peasant Party was not anti-state at all; it recognized the Constitution and the monarchy. In fact, he said it had recognized them for some time; he had not mentioned it before due to an oversight and the fact that he was in prison.

A new crisis.

Realizing that he was confronted by a naturally shrewd politician who knew how to use every weapon including ridicule, Pashich not only released Radich from prison but entered into negotiations with

him. What Pashich and Radich negotiated about is not known, but the P-P government fell and on July 18, '25 the Serbian Radical and the Croatian Peasant parties formed a coalition government. Radich became minister of education in a cabinet which contained several rabid anti-Croatians and pan-Serbians. His purpose presumably was to reduce the whole political situation to absurdity and see what would happen then.

Somebody else was watching too. King Alexander felt the time was ripe for the formation of a "neutral" party, that is, a party of the king. He stepped in and engineered a split in the Radical party. For one thing he wanted to get rid of Pashich—the old fox was too powerful and clever to have around, and he showed no intention of dying.

Pashich at the moment was in no position to fight the king. His son, to whom he was devoted, was in serious trouble. Alexander could put him in prison and threatened to do so if the old man proved obdurate.

Pashich resigned on April 4, '26. His place was taken by Nikola Uzunovich who had lately been accused in parliament of swindling the state on some army hay contracts. Now the situation was really acute —as Alexander had intended to make it. He was getting ready for a showdown. And the worse things got now, the better it would be for him in the end.

After a stormy nocturnal session with King Alexander in the Royal Palace on December 20, '26, Pashich was found dead in his residence. The Radical Party lost its head. Pashich was irreplaceable. In the imagination of thousands of uninformed people he had personified Serbia's struggle for democracy and freedom. Alexander had had reason to fear Pashich.

Now the king felt sure of himself. He rapidly stopped pretending that he was a parliamentary ruler. Soon he would be able to suppress all this discussion of the "Crime of Salonika" that was cropping up in the Skupshtina and the press. He controlled the army; the Royal Guard, commanded by picked White Hand officers, consisted of forty thousand men. This time there were no Apises around. And there were plenty of cheap politicians of all three nationalities avid to do his bidding.

There were the corrupt Serbian reactionaries, the louts who had not had an extra pair of pants in '18; now they were millionaires. There was that cynical Slovenian priest, Koroshets, ready for a deal

any time. He, Alexander, could always dig up a couple of Croatians to be ministers of the government on any terms.

The French general staff, Alexander's chief foreign support, approved of his plans for assuming dictatorial power. They wanted a "strong" military state. They didn't care how he established the dictatorship just as long as he established and maintained it. But Britain and Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia's other two friends, might object. So the thing to do was to finagle politics to such a point that even they would recognize that parliamentarianism was impossible in Yugoslavia.

When he looked at himself in the mirror, Alexander doubtless thought he saw a statesman. That he was not too successful was due to this foolish democracy. Somewhere in him he was a Serbian; and as king, he thought of himself as the guardian of Serbdom. But the values and ways of life which made his people a great people had, apart from heroism in crisis, nothing to do with him. He had as much relation to Serbdom as the average Ku Klux Klan Kleagle has to the American values for which he professes to fight.

Alexander was a product of his background, part of which has been suggested. He had been impressed as a boy by the absolute rule of the Russian tsar. His soul had doubtless been affected by the brutality of the three wars in which he had fought, by the retreat to Albania. The regicide of 1903 never left his mind. He had a guilty conscience about the Salonika Case. . . .

After Pashich's death two dangerous politicians remained—Stepan Radich and Svetozar Pribichevich. Both were popular. He would get them both—

From Political Chicanery to Crime: 1926-'29

In the middle '20s Svetozar Pribichevich went through a painful process. In Belgrade, now a city of nearly a quarter of a million, the grafters were triumphant. The Charshiya was uppermost and its leading beneficiaries were moving into new palaces. Alexander was on their side. One theory had it that the king was deliberately encouraging corruption in high government officials and big businessmen in order to create quickly an upper class, an "aristocracy," whose interests would be so closely linked to his that he could depend on it.

Along with many other prechanski Democrats as well as Democrats in Serbia proper, Pribichevich finally perceived that centralism was a mistake. He had been drugged by the enthusiasms of his youth. Along with others, he realized that "national freedom" alone had no substance; it was nothing in itself; it was not an end but a means, an opportunity through which South-Slavic peoples could rise politically, socially and culturally.

The Cult of Kossovo had been a spiritual-political force in the past. It had helped create a "national state," but of what use was that state if it did not give the people a better standard of living, a larger measure of social justice and economic security than they had had under the Turk, the Austro-German or the Magyar?

The ruling clique looked upon Croatia as a colony to be exploited for the benefit of Serbia—for the top crust in Serbia. Great sums of national wealth were stolen from the people. The king drew from the state treasury the equivalent of a million dollars a year, most of which he salted down abroad. By his own example, Alexander encouraged graft. It spread from the politicians to the generals and to their "*kumovi i tetke*," godfathers and aunts.

Pribichevich saw that his faith in Alexander had been misplaced.

His error had maneuvered him into the P-P government. That fantastic collaboration with Pashich had disillusioned his followers in Croatia whose principal opponents—merchants, usurers, shyster lawyers, *birtiyashi* (saloonkeepers) and the better-paid bureaucrats—had joined the Pashich forces because of his apparent monopoly on the premiership. The P-P collaboration had disillusioned Croatia as a whole, for the combination, consisting of two almost exclusively Serbian parties, made it appear that Serbians on both sides of the Drina and the Sava were arrayed against the rest of the country. This was exactly the impression Pashich and Alexander had wished to create. Pribichevich realized he had fallen into their trap.

He must correct his error as well as he could. He had been led into it partly by Stepan Radich's opposition to the state.

Pribichevich saw it was partly through his own blindness that Belgrade had made Croatia into a colony. Now the prechanski South-Slavs—Croatians, Slovenians and Serbians—who had fought Vienna and Budapest for a hundred years, would have to fight all over again—the Belgrade Charshiya this time.

Through this process of thinking the prechanski Serbians reached political maturity in '26. They were ripe for down-to-earth democratic action. Svetozar Pribichevich, whose personality still excited people, still drew them to him for leadership, was fighting mad. He held some three hundred meetings and was received with tremendous enthusiasm. The people saw that here was an honest man. And that was what mattered, not his blundering.

The election of September 11, '27 was the turning point. With Pashich out of the way in his grave, the Serbians and Croatians on both sides of the rivers gave Pribichevich and Radich 583,000 votes against 505,000 for the king's party, the Serbian Radicals.

Radich and Pribichevich formed the Peasant-Democratic Coalition, a belated duplicate of the Serbo-Croatian Coalition of ten or fifteen years earlier save that it was backed also by many plain people and some of the intelligentsia in Serbia proper, and was directed against the Charshiya of Belgrade and its equivalent in Zagreb.

At the first Coalition meeting, Stepan Radich greeted his ally in the following words: "Dear Svetozar! I am very happy that after so many years we find ourselves again on the same side, carrying on the work of our youth. You and your Independent Democratic Party are the turbine, we of the Peasant Party the waterfall. Together we will produce such a current that no man, no force, will be able to stop it."

The new Coalition had a country-wide appeal and purpose. There were instant echoes from Shumadiya, South Serbia, Macedonia. The Constitution which Radich had opposed now served him and Pribichevich well; it guaranteed freedom of speech and the press. And both men made full use of their talent as speakers and writers.

They spoke and wrote as Serbo-Croatians, as Yugoslavs. In a speech in parliament, for instance, Radich said, "I think I can best express our national unity by saying, without fear that the Croatian people will hold it against me, that I am a Serbian who speaks Croatian." The remark broke down walls all over Yugoslavia. In Serbian villages peasants went around saying, "I am a Croatian who speaks Serbian," and they doubled up with appreciative laughter. The Serbo-Croatian problem was solving itself.

Radich was able to win the devout Roman-Catholic peasants and townspeople from reactionary bishops and priests without destroying their faith in God. What might he not do with the downtrodden, poverty-stricken, malarial inhabitants of South Serbia and Macedonia where they still plowed with wooden plows?

The thought sent a shudder down Belgrade's autocratic spines. King Alexander was accustomed to playing one political party, one racial or religious group against another. Now he had to act swiftly to achieve what he had in mind, what his combined background and personal nature demanded. The Peasant-Democratic Coalition was more than a movement for political equality; it was doing the spadework for social and economic reforms. It had to be stopped.

In the "Crime of Salonika" frame-up one of the principal witnesses against Apis had been a shifty-eyed *mangup* named Punisha Rachich, native of a mountain region bordering on South Serbia and Albania. Alexander and Pashich let him hang around after he had served them at Salonika. By-and-by his home district, dominated by the local Chetnik outfit, "elected" him a Radical deputy to the Skupshtina, where no one paid much attention to him.

Then on a hot summer day in '28—in the course of a debate in an open session of the parliament during which a couple of Serbian reactionaries hurled insults at the Democratic-Peasant Coalition—Deputy Punisha Rachich suddenly pulled a gun and blazed away at the Coalition benches. He seemed to aim specially at Radich and Pribichevich. He missed the latter. Five deputies were wounded; three fatally, including Stepan Radich.

His nephew, Paul Radich, died at once in the arms of Deputy

Sava Kosanovich, a prechanski Serbian. Kosanovich cried out, "In God's name, what are you doing to the state?" Voyvoda Luné, formerly a notorious chetnik in South Serbia, answered, "This is how we cleanse our honor! In blood!"

Punisha Rachich left the parliament hall unmolested. He went straight to the ministry of the interior and sent in his card to the minister, the Reverend Anton Koroshets. Cynical as he was by now, the priest rebelled at sight of the assassin's card. He knew what had happened in the Skupshtina; his secretary informed the caller that the minister was not in the habit of receiving murderers.

Koroshets, head of the police, should have had the killer arrested then and there. Why didn't he? Had he known of the conspiracy beforehand? Did he know that the shooting had been ordered? By the king? . . .

It was hours after that detectives picked up the murderer at his apartment. He made no attempt to escape. He was sure of his safety. He was sentenced to a term in the Pozharevats prison, but was often seen in town. At times he visited his family in Belgrade. His wife received a pension from a secret fund.

King Alexander had the effrontery to visit Stepan Radich in the hospital before he died. What happened between them is unknown. All manner of tales have been told about this meeting. But everyone who knew Radich is certain that he did not advise the king to establish a dictatorship, as Rebecca West has it in her book *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon.* That became the official story after Radich's death.

The incident horrified Yugoslavia and all Europe—which was what Alexander wanted. No one knew what—or who—had been behind the murder; two and two were put together later, but only inside Yugoslavia, not in London or Prague.

Throughout the world people in authority—too shocked or busy or indifferent or gullible to investigate—jumped to the easy conclusion that the South-Slavs were incapable of self-government, that the only way out was dictatorship. Prague and London at last believed that Alexander alone could save the situation—which had been the French general staff's thesis for some time.

Fearing the worst but not knowing just how far Alexander meant to go, Svetozar Pribichevich tried desperately to prevent the abolition of democracy. A few days after Radich's death he advised the king:

"In the name of Stepan Radich and in my own name I recommend that the formation of the new government be entrusted to the Opposi-

tion which will immediately dissolve the parliament in which the murders were committed and which will conduct free elections for a new parliament. If for any reason whatever it is impossible to entrust the formation of the government to the Opposition, I recommend that a new government be formed which will immediately dissolve the present parliament and hold free elections for a new parliament."

But Alexander did not wish the "bloody" parliament dismissed. He wanted to impress the outside world with his patience. Actually he had already dismissed constitutional parliamentarianism from his calculations.

The deputies of the Peasant-Democratic Coalition left Belgrade in protest.

Pribichevich's party, still trying to ward off the dictatorship, invited the Democratic Party of Serbia to join forces with the Coalition for the purpose of revising the Constitution to provide wide autonomies for the traditional territorial units—Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Slovenia, etc. The invitation was declined. The leaders of the Democratic Party were Serbians-of-Serbia before they were democrats; they feared the Coalition's threat to Serbia's hegemony.

Their reasoning was stated by one of them, Milan Grol: "It is clear that the reorganization of the state as demanded by the Peasant-Democratic Coalition would not be based on the economic and social needs of the people . . . but that its purpose would be to guarantee a new and proportional distribution of influence on the part of the various national groups with the express aim of limiting the influence and rights of the central part of the nation"—Serbia.

Foregoing the opportunity to unite all Yugoslav democratic elements into a powerful political bloc that might have made Alexander pause, Grol and his colleagues joined forces with the Radicals whom they hated—and with the worst faction in the Radical Party at that. Grol became minister of education. The Reverend Anton Koroshets of the Slovenian Clerical Party became prime minister.

On January 6, '29 Alexander proclaimed the dictatorship.

Grol, who hadn't seen it coming, was enraged; he retired. Koroshets calmly changed to the ministry of transportation and the premiership went to Pera Zhivkovich, the White Hand general and commander of the Royal Guard.

It was the end of Yugoslavia's "free period."

Most of the politicians who came to the top in Yugoslavia during the 1920s—and during the '30s—were grafters, weaklings, oppor-

tunists or blunderers. In this, Yugoslavia was not unique in Europe or in the world. France, for instance, was much worse. And I have explained (in the chapter on Josip Vidmar) why political corruption and characterlessness inevitably dominate most small countries.

But while political sordidness was uppermost, there were in Yugoslavia a considerable number of honest leaders in several parties who stuck to their principles and did good work although at that time they faced nothing but discouragement in the international picture. Most of their names mean nothing outside Yugoslavia; none the less I want to list a few of them—Adam, Milan and Valeriyan Pribichevich (Svetozar's brothers; an amazing family), Vladko Machek, Ivan Subashich, Dragoylub Yovanovich, Vecheslav Vilder, Sergjan Budisavlyevich, Duda Boshkovich, Ivan Pernar, Sava Kosanovich, Bozhidar Markovich, and hundreds of anonymous underground labor leaders and Communists—Croatians, Serbians and Slovenians who, in their various ways, served as focal points of the common man's opposition to the dominant element in Belgrade and to the foreign interests in back of it. Under their leadership, the peoples of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Macedonia and other regions did not succumb to the subversive terror of the '20s and to the military dictatorship which began in '29. In Germany and Italy, when called to the polls by the dictatorial governments to say "Yes" or "No," ninety-five percent of the voters said "Yes." The opposite was true in Yugoslavia. Again and again, in the face of terror, a majority of voters said "No!" to the *diktatura*. That took character. And it built character. It got the country ready for '41 and after.

But the most important figure in this process was Svetozar Pribichevich after he found himself in the late '20s. The regime wanted desperately to get rid of him but having failed to kill him in parliament in '28 it could not very well have a second attempt made on his life. So the king-dictator ordered him arrested and shipped to Brus, a malarial village on the Bulgarian border. Thomas Masaryk appealed for his release but Alexander, who hated the democratic president of Czechoslovakia, turned him down. Pribichevich demanded that he be tried before the court for the safety of the state and went on a hunger strike which lasted for sixteen days, until he was released on the intervention of Aristide Briand, the French foreign minister. Alexander refused Pribichevich a trial because he was afraid of what it might bring to light about the regime; now he let him go into exile and Pribichevich went to Paris, to lead an extremely constricted existence. Poor and ill, he finally moved to

Prague, where he died in '36. But before his death he exposed Alexander and his politics in a number of pamphlets and in the book I have mentioned.

After '27 Svetozar Pribichevich came as close to becoming a great man as a politician ever could in the Balkans or in any small country where international and internal forces insist on turning every public leader into a grafter or impotent fool or blunderer. An honest man, he did his best to repair the effect of his political mistake. In a pamphlet published in Paris in '32 he referred to his writings before the war while he was editor of the Zagreb *Serbobran* in which "I praised to the skies the freedom prevailing in Serbia. I kept telling the Croatians that they would realize what freedom means only after they became united with Belgrade. Events have dreadfully belied my words. Instead of being a nest of freedom as it was before the war [under King Peter], Belgrade became after the war a center of aggression, reaction and autocracy whose ruthlessness and mercilessness has no equal in any Balkan country, not to speak of the civilized countries of Europe."

His pamphlets were smuggled into Yugoslavia, and he became the voice and thought of many people throughout the country who opposed the dictatorship. His thinking reached to the roots of the situation. "Centralization saps the sources of our national strength," he wrote. "But the 'center' is not the city of Belgrade. It is not the people of Serbia. It is a number of over-privileged families in Belgrade whose fortune and power rest on corruption and who are intimately connected [with privileged families elsewhere in the country and with interests outside it]. We must regard these people as the parasites of Yugoslavia."

In short, Svetozar Pribichevich became a social revolutionary and as such the foremost leader of the popular impulse that began to find concrete political expression during '41-'43. The people knew that what had led him into his error of 1919-'26 was his incorruptible, idealistic, passionate belief in Serbo-Croatian unity. They knew too that he could have been dictator with Alexander had his principles not precluded it. He could have been, next to Alexander, the richest man in Yugoslavia. He scorned wealth. He chose imprisonment in the country of which he was one of the principal creators and death in exile and poverty. And the people were also aware that he never became embittered, never lost his faith in the common man.

His pamphlets and statements from Paris read very much like Henry Wallace's and Wendell Willkie's speeches of '42-'43. "Democ-

racy," he wrote in '32, "cannot feel secure in any one country until a democratic front [of peasants, workers and genuine intelligentsia who will wage a determined fight against reaction] is created in the whole world. Democracies cannot survive the chaos which prevails on this earth today if they remain isolated from one another. . . . An international democratic front is inevitably necessary if democracy is to be assured against sudden attack. Up to this time formation of such a front has been prevented by antiquated ideas of absolute state sovereignty according to which one nation has no right to interfere in any shape, form or manner in the affairs of other nations. But would slavery of one man to another have been abolished had that principle of non-interference prevailed? Would it be possible today to speak seriously about a United States of Europe or about universal peace, if mankind were not prepared to remove that idea from its pedestal and put in its place the idea of brotherhood and solidarity among the peoples?

"It should be clear to everyone by this time that the ideal of world peace and general disarmament cannot be realized until genuine democracy is established throughout the world. It is futile to speak about these great ideas as long as individual countries, even great countries, are ruled by open or concealed dictatorships which represent the spirit of imperialism, militarism, megalomania, and chauvinism and which by their very structure and mentality carry within themselves the seeds of future conflicts and wars. Democracy by its very existence removes the sources of conflicts among nations. . . . Democracy provides a solution not only for our own national and state problem but also for the great problem of world peace and consolidation."

Dictatorship and Death: 1929-'34

In many ways Alexander's terror in Croatia was worse than the Hapsburg oppression up to 1914. In the Croatian Diet under the Dual Monarchy a member had once burst out that his people would not be happy until the hoofs of Cossack horses were heard on the streets of Vienna; another, in the same Diet, had exclaimed, "With guns in our hands we shall march on Vienna!"; and a third had called Austria-Hungary "an infamous state." None of these men had been severely persecuted. Nor, in the years immediately before the war, did the monarchy execute or torture Croatian fanatics who assassinated Austrian and Hungarian officials. Hapsburg law recognized political passion as extenuation for such crimes and—in more or less normal times—the criminals were given prison sentences up to twenty years.

In '31, under Alexander, two young Croatians were executed in Zagreb for allegedly taking part in the assassination of a pro-regimist newspaperman. The accusation was not proved, although their political fanaticism was established. In the same year another fanatical Croatian, twenty-two years old, was hanged in Belgrade for killing the mayor of Nova Gradishka.

These comparisons appeared in a pamphlet by Svetozar Pribichevich. Belgrade regimists retorted: "That is why Austria collapsed."

"No," answered Pribichevich. "Austria collapsed because there was not more freedom; because the state's internal organization was not directed toward the contentment of all its peoples."

As a result of Alexander's brand of oppression, the old Frankovtsi political movement, disbanded in '18, secretly revived, forming an underground anti-regimist terror organization called the Ustashi, resembling the Serbian Chetniks at their worst, also the Falange of Spain and Latin America, and the K.K.K. and the Black Legion of the United States. No balanced Croatian joined it, for terrorism was alien to the Croatian character which, as already mentioned, prefers passive

resistance. But the Ustashi outfit attracted disbalanced people, and oppression disbalanced more and more.

Their leader was Anté Pavelich, who for a while in the middle '20s had been a sullen deputy in the Skupshtina. After the shooting in the parliament chamber in '28 he withdrew from open political life. He disappeared entirely when the dictatorship was proclaimed. Then rumors circulated that he was in Italy enjoying the support of the Fascist regime. Working from there, he continued to recruit Ustashi storm-troopers, some eight hundred of whose leaders and would-be leaders slipped over the border into Italy and Hungary to train as terrorists.

Almost throughout the period when Croatia was an "autonomous" state under Hungary, the Croatians had been allowed their own flag. It was their continuous and significant symbol of national entity in an ever-changing political situation.

Now beginning in '29, under the Alexandrian dictatorship, gendarmes had orders—for the sake of "unity"—to clout anyone who raised the Croatian flag. This made the flag all the more important and many Croatians were willing to be beaten for displaying it. There were endless incidents which rippled nationalistic emotions in all directions; but the ripples were not noted by the world outside of Yugoslavia—the "democratic" world whose responsible people thought that Alexander was creating a "strong" state that would hold up its end in the oncoming war.

The situation reached a kind of loose climax in '34 during the months just before Alexander's fatal journey to France. The incidents became more and more fantastic.

At a wedding in a hamlet near the city of Karlovats the bridegroom carried the Croatian flag. After the ceremony he reported to a judge in town, requesting punishment. He said that if he went back to the village the gendarmes would beat him. The sympathetic judge gave him a fourteen-day sentence, which the newly-wed began to serve at once. The gendarmerie, however, got wind of the affair and forced the judge to turn the prisoner over "for investigation." They beat him nearly to death.

Realizing that this sort of thing would never succeed with the people, an adherent of the dictatorship complained to the district commandant of the gendarmerie, an ardent Serbian regimist, and received the following reply: "Let us alone, we know what we're doing. If they thought they could get away with a short jail term for carrying their

flag, Croatia would be covered with Croatian flags. We haven't enough jails to accommodate the whole population. But if they know that we'll break their bones for showing the flag, they'll think twice—"

Early in January '34 the leadership of the Croatian Peasant Party secretly distributed leaflets with a few words of greeting and the hope that the new year would be a "happier one." When the political police learned of this, hundreds of local leaders were seized and beaten—some were inhumanly tortured—before they were brought to trial under the provisions of the law for the safety of the state.

In Osiek, a seventy-year-old Catholic priest was arrested in the middle of a sub-zero night and taken barefoot in his underwear to the gendarmerie headquarters. Others in Osiek had nails driven through their hands, their bones were broken, the soles of their feet pounded with rubber truncheons. When a young prechanski-Serbian lawyer in Lika, Dr. Bogdan Bruich, entered a strong protest, the gendarmes beat him within an inch of his life.

Through his wife Bruich was related to a regimist who had attached himself to the dictatorship in order to save his business. This man organized a committee of well-known people who called on the governor in Zagreb, Dr. Ivan Perovich, an appointee of Alexander's. "Bruich is a Pribichevich man," he told the group, "an enemy of the state. Against such as he any and all measures may be used. I am appalled that persons among the king's supporters find it possible to intercede for such people."

Along with inhabitants of other regions, more and more Croatians felt that Alexander was to blame for all this brutality. The suspicion spread that he had ordered the assassination of Radich. Some of the Croatian deputies who had been in Belgrade at the time whispered what they knew of Punisha Rachich's visit to the ministry of the interior after firing the shots.

The underground Ustashi movement grew extremely active, blowing up trains, bridges, railroad stations and other public buildings. The court for the safety of the state condemned Anté Pavelich to death.

In Macedonia and South Serbia terrorism, sometimes in charge of Chetnik groups working for "big-shots" in Belgrade, was even worse than in Croatia. It drove people into anti-Belgrade terrorist organizations whose centers were across the border in Bulgaria. Some joined Pavelich and his second-in-command, Eugen Kvaternik. In the middle of '34 there was also a terrorist camp at Yanka Puszta in Hungary near the Yugoslav border which trained both Croatian Ustashi and

Macedonian Comitadjis. Their purpose was to kill Alexander Karageorgevich. They had the support of agents of the Horthy government in Budapest. They had a sizable membership among Croatian immigrants in America who at various times published three Ustashi papers.

Alexander had long feared assassination—one reason why he had liquidated Apis and established the dictatorship. The first attempt on his life, already mentioned, had been made on June 29, '21 by a Communist named Steyich who threw a bomb at the carriage in which he was riding with Premier Pashich from the Skupshtina where he had just taken a solemn oath to uphold the Constitution adopted the previous day.

Anté Pavelich's Ustashi planned to kill him on December 14, '33 when he visited Zagreb, but the plot miscarried.

In common with many Serbians, Alexander regarded Tuesday as a day of ill luck; the Battle of Kossovo was lost on that day. He believed in prophecies and dreams. He often spoke of his ability to foresee what would befall him.

In January '34 he wrote his last will appointing a regency in case of his death—Prince Paul; Dr. Radoyé Stankovich, his physician and personal friend; and Ivan Perovich, his governor of Croatia, the man who had been "appalled" at protests against the terror.

In the summer of '34 Alexander was obliged to pay a state visit to King Boris in Sofia. By then he and his whole entourage were terribly afraid of assassination. At the strongest insistence of his own secret political police, the Bulgarian government arrested and imprisoned during his visit over three hundred persons, many of them Serbians and Croatians living in Sofia.

Whenever he participated in a public affair in Yugoslavia, the measures taken to insure his safety were so drastic that they are simply incredible to citizens of countries where personal liberty is an element of state organization. On any street the king went down, all windows and doors had to be closed; house-owners were held responsible for any left open. Every two feet stood a gendarme or police agent, gun in hand, watchfully facing the throng.

His was a gangster's life.

A few days before his departure for Sofia the king was deeply impressed by an old Catholic woman who had come to the Royal Palace insisting on seeing him. In a dream she had spoken with his father, the late King Peter, who told her he had seen Alexander all

covered with blood, and bade her inform the king. She had confided in her confessor, who had urged her to go to the marshal of the court and ask for an audience.

While the old woman told her story Alexander was very nervous. Never a generous man, he gave her a large sum of money, said he was thinking of making peace with the people, and sent her home in his car. . . . It may be that he really decided to drop the *diktatura* and return to constitutional parliamentarianism. No one knows what he thought. But people about him, as they soon recalled, noticed that suddenly he was almost mellow. He was gentle and considerate. At times his mind seemed to be far away. One day he sent for Franyo Bastel, an astrologist living in Zagreb, who gave him a negative opinion on the chances of his living out '34. . . .

It had been decided that as soon as possible after returning from Sofia the king would go on a state visit to France. There, owing to democracy, severe protective measures would be impossible. It was almost like going to his doom. Perhaps now he admitted to himself that he had made a tragic mistake. His rule the last few years provided no vent for the people's dissatisfaction. Unlike Hitler's regime in Germany, he had created no new movements to channelize and exploit popular discontent. There were extremely tough times ahead. Hitler . . . Mussolini . . . the Magyar revisionists—the country was surrounded by enemies. It needed him. He had done one good thing anyhow—built up the army. It was his army. But perhaps something more —something different—was needed. . . .

It is almost certain that he intended to discuss with the French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou and the general staff the question of redemocratizing Yugoslavia. Was there time? Would war hold off long enough to give him a chance to repair his error? . . . After his death many people in Yugoslavia believed that something of this sort had been going through Alexander's head in September and early October of '34.

Alexander went to France on one of the few Yugoslav naval vessels, the small cruiser *Dubrovnik* . . . and circumstances arranged for him to arrive at Marseilles on *Tuesday*, October 9, '34. Trying to shake off his superstition, and also because his naval uniform was too tight, he refused to put on his shirt of mail. It would not have saved him anyway.

Alexander came ashore at four o'clock. The amazing news-reel which the world saw a week or so later showed his face drawn with

fear. Taking his seat in the car beside Barthou, he glanced about and saw there was almost no police protection. Just ahead were the crowds, undoubtedly full of assassins. He was on the spot, and he knew it. He was rigid. . . . He heaved a pitiful half-sigh held in mid-breath. The car moved on.

A few minutes later he was dying from the bullets pumped into him by a Macedonian terrorist named Georgieff who had been working in collaboration with Pavelich's Ustashi, several of whom were ready with guns further on up the street. Barthou was mortally wounded too. The police cut Georgieff down with sabers the instant after his deed.

The first Yugoslav to come to the side of the unconscious king was his foreign minister, Bogolyub Yevtich, a dark, pudgy little man who had served him for years as well as he could with his talents for international finagling. Now his sharp small mind ferreted desperately for some trick which would assure his future. A half-hour later he declared to the press that the king had whispered to him: "*Chuvayté mi Yugoslaviyu*!—Guard Yugoslavia for me!" After the shots, Alexander was unable to say anything, but Yevtich's neat little invention helped him become the next prime minister of Yugoslavia. . . .

In the November '34 *Contemporary Review* Wickham Steed wrote that the assassination of King Alexander could not have come as a surprise to anyone who had carefully followed events. "For a number of years his life was in danger and he knew it." Mr. Steed added that in '32 he had been told by two Serbians that anything might happen in Yugoslavia at any moment if the government did not radically change its methods.

The assassination created a grave international situation. Official Hungary, Italy and Germany were implicated through their agents. But Yevtich, head of the Yugoslav delegation to the League of Nations, was asked by his French and English colleagues not to accuse Italy and Germany. All right, said Yevtich; whom could he accuse? Hungary? There was a nod. But when his turn came to speak, the Yugoslav foreign minister scarcely knew how to put it. Benes of Czechoslovakia and Titulescu of Rumania took the floor from him and in a few quick phrases defined the assassination as an "international crime" which touched the interests of all countries. The League passed a resolution condemning the crime but not the criminal. . . . By-and-by there was no doubt that a part, the ultra-corrupt part, of France was also implicated. High officials in the French secret service had collab-

orated with Hitler's and Mussolini's agents; had made it easy for Georgieff to shoot Alexander.*

Mussolini, who probably had had as much to do with the assassination as anyone, dipped the Italian flag to the dead king as the cruiser *Dubrovnik* passed around Sicily on the way home.

The Croatian-Macedonian fanatics had had their own reasons for wanting to kill Alexander. But the Nazi-Fascist powers had helped them for quite different reasons, although at certain points the assassins and the agents of the Fuehrer and the Duce had psychologically a good deal in common. All worked for ultra-nationalist causes, as did Alexander.

All were adherents to the cult of political murder; an old cult in the Balkans. And not only in the Balkans. In 1106 Catholics in general condoned the unnatural death of the anti-papal Henry IV of France. Hitlerism and forces akin to it, which are not restricted to Germany and the Axis, have "Balkanized" Western Europe and made resort to political murder inevitable. Since '41 the United States has come to condone and even to regard with approval political murder in France, Holland, Belgium, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece and Yugoslavia. Britain has gone even further. In '42 its censorship and military-intelligence apparatus at least tacitly cooperated with the inner clique of the Yugoslav government-in-exile in sending to Mikhailovich—over British-controlled communications—lists of people in occupied Yugoslavia whom it wanted assassinated.

For decades the Balkans have been unthinkingly referred to as the "powder keg of Europe." The Balkans have been the keg, but the Great Powers have been filling it with powder. Then the whole of Europe and the world became the keg. . . .

The Marseilles incident was the result of international gangsterism which had cunningly exploited the political pathology in Yugoslavia of which Alexander was the momentary center. And the political pathology itself was partly a result of that same international gangsterism in the past. Killing Alexander was a good thing from the Nazi-Fascist angle. He was a "strong" man. His death would weaken Yugoslavia, for he had so conducted her affairs that there was no one to take his place.

In a very real sense, Alexander Karageorgevich was the first important casualty in the world-wide struggle that was heading for World War II. And many in Yugoslavia realized this, among them

* See Appendix I, page 481.

a lot of simple people who forgave him and knelt weeping beside the railroad track as his train sped across the country from Split to Belgrade; at the same time, many others could not squeeze a tear from strained eyes . . . intent on peering into a still more uncertain, darkening future.

Through Decline Toward Disaster: 1934-'41

THE FRENCH PRESS AND OFFICIAL SPOKESMEN PROMPTLY TURNED Alexander into a great man—"*le roi preux . . . le roi chevalier . . . le roi unificateur*" (the heroic king, the knightly king, the king unifier). At the request of the French delegates, the League of Nations included these phrases in a resolution of homage to the dead king for which both friends and enemies of Yugoslavia voted.

Official France felt obliged to glorify him. She had—in part deliberately—given him almost no protection, and he had died on her soil. These facts had to be glossed over.

The democratic world was confused by all this; so were some people in Yugoslavia. Alexander had hardly been a unifier; his pan-Serbian ultra-centralism had ripped the country apart. There was some basis for "heroic;" but what did "knightly" or "chivalrous" mean? A few weeks after his death it came out that his family inherited eight million dollars deposited in Swiss, French, English and American banks; all accumulated since 1919. What could Dr. Andriya Stampar not have done to raise the country's health standards with eight million dollars! That hadn't occurred to Alexander; instead, he kicked him out of his job. . . .

One can build a powerful case against Alexander, as did Svetozar Pribichevich with incontestable documentation before and after the assassination. It can be shown that in every major respect he was an opportunist, a schemer, a blunderer. In spite of his active participation in the Little Entente, he was basically anti-Czech even when Masaryk and Benes, following the French line of diplomacy, were unwisely backing him against the Croatians, to the detriment of democracy in Yugoslavia. At times he seemed capable of a pro-Axis

reorientation. He was primarily an autocrat clinging to his own background, not a leader forging into the future.

Yet in the early '30s Alexander *was* a "strong man" and his methods and their surface results gave the illusion that diplomatically and militarily Yugoslavia was a power with which the Great Powers would have to reckon. Some people here and there retained the illusion, believing that if Alexander had lived Hitler might not have dared to occupy Austria. There might have been no Munich. The Little Entente might have held together during 1935-'38. World War II might have been delayed.

But for most people the illusion vanished with Alexander. He left nothing behind but an ill-ordered state, a cross-current of bad feeling. While his earthly remains in the Karageorgevich church at Topola were turning to dust the country under Prince-Regent Paul found itself sliding down a chute headed for disaster. No one seemed able to arrest the descent.

All that the honest political leaders could do was stick to the people's determined opposition to official Belgrade and hope that the future held a chance for democracy. Caught in a complex situation which was more international than domestic, no one appeared able to make an open positive move. All the big or potentially big people's leaders were dead, in exile, in prison, or trapped in their own momentary limitations and inhibitions. Other able people—like most of those in the rest of Europe—had been financially corrupted or psychologically twisted into utter impotence.

No one knows why Alexander appointed Paul chief regent. Perhaps because, apart from Alexander's brother George whom he held interned as insane in a villa near Nish, Paul was the only living adult Karageorgevich prince, and the king had felt the regency must include someone of royal blood. Also, in spite of his fears, Alexander no doubt held onto the hope that he would not die for a while.

It was generally known in Yugoslavia that the king had not liked his cousin and had treated him like so much dirt. The two men were utterly dissimilar. Alexander's dislike dated from 1915, when Paul had behaved in a manner unbecoming to a Serbian and a Karageorgevich. Against King Peter's direct orders he had deserted the retreating army, made his way to Salonika and thence to Italy, and gone to live with his Russian aunt, Madame Moyna Abamalek-Lazarev, in her villa outside of Florence.

Paul was half Russian, the son of Moyna's older sister, Aurora

Demidov, whose family moved in St. Petersburg society. His father was King Peter's brother, the impoverished Prince Arsen Karageorgevich, a bodyguard of the Empress Maria Feodorovna. His mother had no use for him or his father. His disgusted aunt said to the Serbian minister in Rome in '16: "Paul has come to hide behind my skirts. Tell me what to do with him." The minister suggested sending him to England on the pretext of continuing his studies. He entered Oxford and thus began his contact with the British. In '18 he refused to take part in the Salonika offensive even as a Red Cross worker.

Paul did not like Serbia or Belgrade, but shortly after the war he returned "home"—presumably his aunt and mother had left him in the lurch financially. No one ever understood why Alexander let him come back unless it was because of the dynasty. The royal family was so very small that even Paul mattered.

In the mid-'20s he married Olga, a Greek princess, who, like her sister Marina (the Duchess of Kent), was ambitious and shrewd. Alexander allowed his cousin a tiny income from the state, and Olga hated him and his wife, a daughter of Queen Marie of Rumania. She gave Paul three children and a touch of character—the wrong kind so far as the interests of the Yugoslav people were concerned.

Olga and Marina built Paul up into a friend of the British. But that too was unfortunate for Yugoslavia. His closest British connections in the middle and late '30s were the wrong kind—part of the crowd that eventually was labelled too neatly the Cliveden Set. Through various channels, including the British minister in Belgrade, Sir Nevile Henderson, they got him to reorient Yugoslavia toward the Axis. Perhaps some of the credit for this should go to that other favorite of the Cliveden Set, the slick champagne salesman, Joachim von Ribbentrop, later Hitler's foreign minister.

Paul had no use for the innocuous Bogolyub Yevtich, the first post-Alexandrian premier; he was inept, his English was barely understandable, and he half believed that Alexander had told him: "Guard Yugoslavia for me!" Whatever may be said against Yevtich, he was at least a tentative Yugoslav and a poor dictator. He had rejected Goering's advances to Yugoslavia late in '34 and early '35. He was involved in the European collective-security plans with Benes, Titulescu, Herriott, Barthou and Kemal Ataturk.

So seven months after Alexander's death Paul allowed a general election, knowing the people would vote against the premier. The people did—emphatically, although in his muggy desperation Yevtich

had employed the whole state police and some of the Chetnik outfits to terrorize the voters into endorsing him.

The election results of May 5, '35, were overwhelmingly pro-democracy; but the leadership of the various democratic and peasant or agrarian parties was too full of hangovers from the Alexandrian period to form any sort of positive country-wide people's coalition. The Croatian Peasant Party, hanging onto the traditions of their dead *vodja*, Stepan Radich, was still mainly in passive opposition.

Tossing out Yevtich, Paul appointed as premier the smart, go-getting promoter Milan Stoyadinovich, educated in Germany, France and England; Radical and Rotarian; former minister of finance; broker for British, French, German and Italian interests; friend of Von Ribbentrop's and Goering's and Ciano's. Stoyadinovich was also made foreign minister . . . and Monsignor Anton Koroshets, vice-premier.

Incapable of being a "strong man" like Alexander, Paul became in effect even more evil. He had all the subtlety of weakness. With the aid of Stoyadinovich, Koroshets and others whose talents were always at his beck and call—to say nothing of Princess Olga whose maternal ambitions longed to crowd out the young king, Peter II, and his brothers—he gradually took the whole power of the regency under his control until he was virtually the sovereign.

He worked his British connections for all they were worth. In the midst of conversations with politicians and Charshiya "big-shots" his delicate hand would casually pick up a letter on his desk, and he would say, "Incidentally, this just came from Lord Halifax; may I read it to you?"

The Alexandrian *diktatura* continued under Paul; only it was not as definite, not quite as brutal. For that reason it was worse in this sense: people did not react to it as clearly, did not crystallize their attitude toward it. The letup brought on a feeling of relief. Things just drifted—exactly what the Axis, getting ready for the war, wanted. The general decline of the state pulled down many an individual's spirit.

All this favored Paul. He could do what he liked; Stoyadinovich and Koroshets were there to help him. Regarding himself as an aristocrat, he had contempt for the people's feelings and ideas. As I have said, he disliked Serbia and Serbians. He liked the Slovenian landscape; it was civilized, very much like Switzerland. He purchased a castle in Upper Slovenia and furnished it with carloads of stuff he ordered from England at the total cost of nineteen million dinars

(some $400,000)—in '33 he and Olga had not even been able to afford a decent radio in their shabby mountain lodge near Lake Bohin. And, like his royal cousin before him, he sent much of his regular income abroad.

In Italy, Paul "purchased" rare paintings . . . and, as I write, a New York art gallery, acting as his agent, has one of them for sale at a fabulous price—over ninety percent higher than he had paid for it.

Stepan Radich's successor as head of the Croatian Peasant Party was Vladko Machek, originally a Slovenian from Styria, a good man, honest and intelligent, but slow to move. In the early '30s under the Alexandrian dictatorship, he was imprisoned. He refused to compromise; Radich was his god and saint. That, plus the anti-Croatian terror, kept the rank and file of the party together. It was an impressive spiritual demonstration, but it afforded the leaders little training for political struggle and statesmanship. They just held on, waiting for the dictatorship to break up or ease up, or for something else to happen.

After Alexander's death Machek was released from confinement. By-and-by he and some of his lieutenants, one a young lawyer named Ivan Subashich, got together with the prince-regent. They were anti-*diktatura* of course; so Paul put on an act. He claimed to be in ill-health. His frail, aristocratic manner implied that this regency business was a great and unwished-for burden. He would criticize Alexander and suggest that he, educated in Switzerland and England, was for a democratic system. Then he would translate passages of a letter from his brother-in-law, the Duke of Kent, or someone at the elbow of Prime Minister Chamberlain.

Although Paul was never as close to the Croatian Peasant leaders as to Stoyadinovich and Koroshets, he got pretty thick with them—especially with idealistic young Ivan Subashich, who was a Yugoslav brimming with genuine enthusiasm for the peasants and their way of life.

Meantime, Premier Stoyadinovich was carrying out the Axis "line," defined from time to time by Herr von Heeren, the German minister in Belgrade. He hunted with Goering and bathed with Ciano. He received cases of champagne from von Ribbentrop. He arranged for Hitler to send a specially made automobile to Peter II and electric choochoo trains to his younger brothers. And he cleverly distributed reliable ministers over the world. To Washington he sent

Konstantin Fotich, one of whose first cousins, Dimitriyé Lyotich, organized and led a Serbian fascist movement patterned after the Nazi party, while another cousin, General Milan Nedich, succumbed to Hitler's *Weltanschauung.*

In '37 Stoyadinovich sent to Rome as his special envoy one Ivan Subotich, who there met with one Milo Budak, a Ustashi leader. Soon after that the Belgrade government authorized the return to Yugoslavia of eighty-odd Ustashi leaders and terrorists, including Budak. Late in '37 Stoyadinovich himself journeyed to Rome and met Anté Pavelich in the office of Foreign Minister Ciano. They were plotting an out-and-out Fascist revolution in Yugoslavia. But finally they decided it would be difficult if not impossible, the Yugoslavs being a peculiar race. Also Hitler did not want Mussolini to get his claws too deep into Yugoslavia; in fact somewhere around this point the Nazi agents in Belgrade became anti-Stoyadinovich. . . . Subotich then went as minister to London, where he and Madame Subotich helped Rebecca West with her book *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon,* as she gratefully acknowledged. In '42 Subotich came to the United States as the exiled Yugoslav government's minister plenipotentiary in charge of International Red Cross relief. The Yugoslav prisoners of war in Germany and Italy were supposed to be his special concern. . . .

By '38 the Stoyadinovich shenanigans had heaped up endless discontent all over Yugoslavia which threatened to burst into open revolt. The statesmanlike, British-like thing to do was to give it an outlet—an election. The people again uttered a resounding "No!" to the whole setup in Yugoslavia. The Croatian Peasant Party came out extremely well. Simply because it stood in clearest opposition to Belgrade, it got a big vote in the rural districts of Serbia, where the slogan was "Vote for Machek"—literally "tomcat"—"he'll get all the rats."

Paul would not make Machek premier; that would be going too far. The man was fantastically honest and the Stepan Radich tradition rumbled behind him. One could not work in delicate matters of state at close range with such a man.

So Paul appointed premier a nonentity named Dragisha Tsvetkovich and gave the foreign ministry to another called A. Tsintsar-Markovich, until then the Yugoslav minister to Berlin. Both were "sort of" Serbian, with strong tsintsari overtones. Delighted to reach their high positions, they were eager to do the prince's bidding.

The Slovenian Clericals, whose machine described in the chapter

about Frants Snoy enabled them to win a decisive victory in the election, got into the "new" government in a big way, while ex-Premier Stoyadinovich caught the fattest plum of all. He was made head of the Belgrade Bourse, the center of the Charshiya.

Machek accepted the vice-premiership and one of the minor ministries went to another Croatian Peasant leader.

Croatia had always sought autonomy. Stepan Radich had fought for it. Once he had talked for a time of a Croatian Republic within the monarchical Yugoslav State. Now Vladko Machek and Ivan Subashich and other Peasant leaders, supported by a majority of prechanski-Serbian politicos as well as by some democratic Serbians in Serbia, brought up this issue which they had tentatively discussed with Paul before, and he and they—in cooperation with the figure-heads, Premier Tsvetkovich and Foreign Minister Tsintsar-Markovich—arranged between them the so-called *Sporazum* or Agreement, under which Croatia attained autonomy in everything but military and foreign affairs, communications and railroads.

The Sporazum went into effect late in August '39, a few days before Hitler attacked Poland. Ivan Subashich became the first banus of autonomous Croatia within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; virtually viceroy. He was a favorite of Machek's, and not unknown to the bulk of the party. None of the followers had anything against him. But of course many Croatians and Serbians in Croatia would have preferred electing a banus to receiving one appointed by Belgrade at the recommendation of Dr. Machek. Nevertheless, even with this flaw, the Sporazum was something. Most people were jubilant. A few pinched themselves; could it really be true?

And it *was* a good thing—so far as it went. But it did not go far enough. Autonomy agreements were not arranged for Serbia and Slovenia and the other regions; they were merely promised. This gave Croatia a great advantage over the other parts of Yugoslavia, which created a sharp reaction and much confusion, particularly in Serbia—for the now autonomous Croatia, governed by Banus or Viceroy Subashich, contained very close to eight hundred thousand Serbians.

In Serbia arose a mood not far removed from irredentism. The pan-Serbians wanted to jump out of their skins and to arms. All that restrained them was the dictatorship still in effect outside of Croatia. The situation rubbed even many level-headed Serbians and Slovenians the wrong way. In Zagreb, under the liberal banus, newspapers were

allowed to publish material that editors in Serbia or Slovenia could not touch. In addition, with the object of weakening its subversive motives, the Peasant regime in autonomous Croatia allowed a part of the Ustashi movement to emerge from underground. A few Ustashi were even given official positions; one or two slipped into Banus Subashich's cabinet. Some of their adherents, imprisoned by Belgrade, were released. But many other "politicals"—Communists—were kept in. The result was an anti-Peasant Party attitude among Leftists not only in Serbia and Slovenia but in Croatia as well.

However, the most unfortunate part of the Sporazum—which almost outweighed the virtues of its principle—was that the Croatian and some of the prechanski-Serbian politicians had entered into it not with all the rest of Yugoslavia, nor even after adequate discussion with their own rank and file, but only with Prince-Regent Paul, who represented no one but himself and Olga, and who with his government was still pursuing the objectionable domestic and foreign policies of the Stoyadinovich regime.

These lacks and errors might not have been so serious had the war not broken out. Had there been "peace" for another year or two, *sporazumi* for the other regions might have been worked out. A Yugoslav Federation of autonomous or semi-autonomous regional and/or national states, might have been created. The war, however, accentuated all fears and splits, and prevented the extension of federal and autonomous principles. At least that was the burden of the subsequent Machek-Subashich apologetics.

The Croatian Sporazum remains one of the most controversial points in Yugoslavia's political history.

After official Yugoslavia finally committed itself, in '36, to a pro-Axis reorientation, the country was overrun with Nazi agents, not all of whom were Germans. There was at least one American, Douglas Chandler, who had published some articles in the *National Geographic Magazine*, whose editors of course had no knowledge of his connections in Germany. But he used the publication as a key to various doors and a mask for his activities. Like many other foreign writers gathering material about Yugoslavia, he enjoyed special privileges. He did not confine himself to writing. On the island of Korchula, off the central coast of Dalmatia, he stirred up a minor pogrom against the few Jewish Yugoslavs and Austrian Jewish refugees. In spite of complaints by some native Korchulani, no one in authority moved against him—until an American, Dr. DeWitt

Stetten of New York who owned a summer home on the island, exposed his activities to the State Department in Washington. Chandler then moved to Italy, where he continued his Axis work. In 1942 American short-wave radio listeners knew him as "Paul Revere" broadcasting Nazi propaganda from Germany. On July 26, '43, the United States Department of Justice indicted him for treason along with Ezra Pound and four other Americans serving as Axis agents. . . .

From early '35 to the late summer of '39 when Hitler attacked Poland, the burden of Belgrade's official propaganda, which the newspapers perforce reflected, was that there would be no war. When the war broke out, the "line" was revised: Yugoslavia would not be drawn into it because this was a conflict among the Great Powers. True, Poland had fallen, but she had the geographical misfortune to be between two great countries with opposing interests and ideologies. Most of the other small states would not be attacked by either side. All Yugoslavia had to do was to get along with her neighbors, Italy and Germany, who were partners in the war, and take care not to provoke them. Besides (up to April '40), this was a "phony war"; the *blitzkrieg* against Poland had turned into a *sitzkrieg* on the Western front.

Most of the people who swallowed this formula did not know it was the work of the Nazi minister in Belgrade. Perhaps only Stoyadinovich and Paul knew the source. Many Yugoslavs hoped against hope it was true. It sounded pretty reasonable. Nearly everybody who had any sort of position spread the propaganda. Nobody did anything to counter it.

This went on year after year, and year after year it nibbled away at the spirit of the people. That the country was playing the Axis game was intolerable to the majority; but what could the average man do about it? Some of the semi-informed people thought that Paul and Stoyadinovich could not help the pro-Axis orientation. What was the alternative? Britain and France (perhaps as a result of Joachim von Ribbentrop's salesmanship in London and Paris) had dropped Yugoslavia economically, forcing her into the grasping claws of Germany and Italy which proceeded to strangle her by exchanging her raw materials and food for cheap manufactured gadgets, cameras and the like.

After Chamberlain and Daladier sold out Czechoslovakia at Munich

some Yugoslavs, now dead sure that Britain and France were to blame for the situation, turned at least indirectly toward the Axis. Where else could they turn? Russia? Those Moscow Trials were hard to understand. They produced much antagonism and confusion among the Leftists already depressed by the breakdown of collective security.

In the late summer of '39, after the conclusion of the Russo-German pact and the invasion of Poland, Vice-Premier Machek began to urge upon Prince-Regent Paul an idea that came close to being statesmanship from the point of view of Yugoslavia's predicament at that time. He wanted Yugoslavia to seek a military alliance with Russia, and thought Russia would want it. He felt such a treaty would have a profound and immediate influence on Bulgaria, causing her shortly to seek the same sort of pact with the Soviet.

If it did nothing else, argued Machek, such a step would at least keep the Axis from gobbling up the Balkan countries one by one before Hitler attacked Russia. When he attacked again in the east, he would have to attack simultaneously Russia and the Balkans.

But Paul would have none of this idea. He hated the Soviet too much. He had gone too far in his pro-Axis policy.

And on his side, having gotten the Croatian Sporazum from him, Machek was too deeply involved with Paul to come out openly for a Russo-Yugoslav military pact. In fact only a handful of people in Yugoslavia knew that he favored it. . . . In a small country, statesmanship has a difficult time getting started. . . .

When war hit Yugoslavia in '41, its army was unprepared: it had stood still while time and Hitler raced on. Most of its personnel under the rank of colonel was excellent. But its organization was never quite as good as King Alexander, its creator, and the French general staff had thought it was. Alexander had been old-fashioned in his military thinking. The soldiers and the younger officers had a powerful fighting tradition. But this was not enough; in the light of the blitz which hit Poland in '39 and Western Europe in '40, it was practically nothing at all.

Clausewitz, perhaps the greatest military expert who ever recorded his ideas, says that after winning an overwhelming victory an army plunges into a crisis, for it tends to rest on its laurels. France and Yugoslavia illustrate this all too well.

The Yugoslav army was the successor of the Serbian army which in a single generation had won not one but three wars. Serbian officers were the frame, the head and the heart of the Yugoslav army; and they knew it all. When a Croatian, Slovenian or prechanski-Serbian officer tried to tell them of some new wrinkle in warfare he had read about in foreign military journals, they either ignored him or replied that *they* had proved on the battlefield that *their* system was best for the Balkans. They were opposed to modern methods of military organization, administration and tactics. Their resistance to motorization was unyielding. In the mountainous Balkans the most reliable motor was a team of oxen. The modernists within the army were mostly junior officers, a minority but a steadily growing one. Among themselves they referred to their superiors' point of view as the "oxen mentality."

When I was in Yugoslavia in '32, a young officer told me that he had recently been in an automobile full of general-staff officers when it got stuck in the middle of a swollen mountain stream which normally was little more than a brook running across the road. They hailed a nearby peasant whose oxen pulled the car out of the water. This incident delighted an elderly Serbian colonel for days. It proved, he chuckled, that motorization was nonsense—an idea got up by profit-hungry iron and steel firms.

The Belgrade regime was unfriendly toward technical progress in general. It put enormous taxes on automobiles and gasoline; only the very rich could afford cars, whose cost, operation and maintenance were two to four times higher than in the United States. For fifteen years various German, British, French and American motor companies tried to get into Yugoslavia, but endless negotiations yielded no results.

Other industrial fields were equally backward, although Yugoslavia was exceptionally rich in raw materials and her villages contained a vast surplus of peasant population which would have been eager to work in well-run factories. The explanation is that Alexander was chronically afraid of the industrial proletariat and did not want any more of it than he could help. He preferred to see the landless people rot in the villages.

The state, although it never had too much money to spend outside of Yugoslavia, bought most of its military supplies in foreign countries—always at a very high price, swelled by graft both at home and abroad.

The army budget was high compared to the expenditures of other

departments. But in relation to military budgets of other countries it was infinitesimal. In the twenty-odd years of her existence Yugoslavia spent only about two billion dollars for her defense—almost nothing alongside of American military budgets since '40. This sum was supposed to equip and maintain an army with a potential wartime strength of two million. It could only provide the peace-time army of two hundred thousand with weapons already obsolete in the big countries. Small as the sum was, however, it was a tremendous burden on the peasantry; and it proved useless.

All in all, the best officers were discouraged and demoralized. A great many of them resigned during the '30s.

Through the years preceding the Axis attack ninety-eight percent of the general officers were Serbians from Serbia, all veterans of the Balkan and the First World wars; the majority of them in their mid-fifties, many in their sixties. Most of them, with Charshiya connections, had become part of the new and corrupt upper class while Alexander was still alive. There was no Apis among them; Alexander and Pashich had seen to that. The careerist White Hand had full sway in the ministry of war, the war college, the general staff. The minister was always a general. Good young officers with progressive technical ideas, even if completely devoid of political implications, had two if not three strikes against them before they got started.

In the '30s one of the highest-ranking generals in the Yugoslav army was Milan Nedich. He was a stern but just commander. His subordinates respected him. He was no Billy Mitchell or Charles de Gaulle, but beside the "oxen mentality" he passed for a technical progressive. In '34 Alexander made him chief of the general staff. Stubborn when it came to ideas, he resigned in six months.

After Alexander's death, Nedich seemed to see with increasing clarity that Yugoslavia was on the chute. A new world war was brewing and, more or less at odds with everybody in authority, he was uncomfortable in Belgrade. He took frequent trips abroad.

In '38 he visited Germany. He was mildly dangerous, so the Nazis showed him some of what was in the works for the next war: munition factories, new weapons, unique tactics. They let him observe maneuvers.

Nedich returned to Belgrade stunned. For weeks he saw no one. Then he consented to speak confidentially to a group of general staff officers. The gist of his remarks was reported to me four years later by a Serbian officer who heard him: "The German military machine

is going into high gear. When it starts to roll over Europe, nothing will stop it, gentlemen, *nothing.* Had I not seen the German army, I could not have imagined the heights it has achieved in training, discipline and morale."

Anti-democratic by nature, he had gravitated toward Alexander; under Paul from '34 to '39 he was utterly disgusted. The regime was neither dictatorship nor democracy. In '39 he happened to be invited, somehow or other, into the government as minister of war; and he accepted. Perhaps he thought he might seize power . . . when . . . and if—

All this time Nedich kept in touch with his cousin, Minister Konstantin Fotich in Washington. And Nedich also maintained the closest relationship with their other cousin, Lyotich, the Nazi fuehrer in Belgrade, whose spiritual headquarters was the German legation there.

Everything points to the conclusion that by '39 Nedich was a convinced pro-Nazi. He played a strange role in the government. Early in November '40, while the Greeks were putting up a glorious fight against the Italians in Albania, a few Italian planes bombed the town of Bitol in Yugoslavia. At the next day's cabinet meeting Minister of War Nedich proposed action. According to people who were present, he wanted Yugoslavia to unite with Germany, attack Greece from the northeast and seize Salonika before the Italians had a chance to get too near it from the northwest. In April '41, in a letter to the *New York Times,* Cousin Fotich explained that General Nedich's idea had really been to attack the Italians and chase them out of Albania. This was the earliest attempt to make the American mind regard Nedich as a "Pétain" rather than a quisling—as if there was any difference. Subsequent events suggest that Hitler had picked Nedich as a Yugoslav quisling long before he got around to taking the country over.

Kossovo Again: 1941

General Nedich's proposal on November 5, '40, that Yugoslavia attack Greece kicked up a momentary crisis in the Belgrade regime. When Nedich was voted down, Paul accepted his resignation and gave the war portfolio to a retired Serbian general named Peter Pesich, a subservient, seventy-year-old soul who had not been in active contact with the army for a decade.

The prince-regent made this appointment although six months earlier President Benes of Czechoslovakia, whose secret service was excellent, had warned him that Yugoslavia's efforts to avoid war with the Axis were bound to fail: the German High Command definitely had a plan for an attack at the most favorable moment.

In January '41 the resourceful Czech secret service got hold of General von Brauchitsch's instructions of December 28, '40, on the occupation of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. No resistance was expected of Bulgaria, but the German high-commander foresaw two possibilities in Yugoslavia and had drawn up two plans for the occupation of Serbia. One was contingent upon resistance; the other upon non-resistance. The instructions tallied with what actually happened between April 6th and 16th.

The Czechs sent Paul a copy of this document. They might as well have sent it to the German minister in Belgrade. The prince-regent had become Hitler's executive in Yugoslavia a good while before, and he was doing his best to turn over Yugoslavia as Horthy, Antonescu and King Boris had delivered Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. No one in Yugoslavia realized this clearly, except perhaps the Nazi minister and Stoyadinovich, with whom Paul was still in close contact. Certainly it never occurred to Paul's Croatian friends.

In February '41 probably not more than ten persons in Yugoslavia knew that in December '39, four months after the war broke out, Paul had a rendezvous with Josef Goebbels at Salzburg, and another

in the following August with von Ribbentrop at Munich. Those who knew—Princess Olga, Premier Tsvetkovich and Foreign Minister Tsintsar-Markovich—were not telling. Equally secret were Paul's two meetings with Goering on the Yugoslav-Hungarian border between October and December '40.

Later there was no doubt about what had been discussed at those meetings. On November 27, '41, von Ribbentrop expressed his desire to Tsintsar-Markovich that Yugoslavia should join the Axis. Tsintsar-Markovich wrote this down and the document was subsequently found in his office. The prince-regent's ideas after the meetings have also come to light. In January '41 he directed his minister to Turkey, a Serbian named Shumenkovich, to communicate to the German ambassador at Ankara, Franz von Papen, that he, Paul, out of friendship for Germany, had rejected an offer of an alliance with France, broken up the Little Entente, weakened the Balkan Pact . . . in fact, had done everything possible to facilitate German penetration into the Balkans.

Paul was not pro-German, pro-Hitler or pro-Axis. He was not much pro-anything except himself. I have called him a character out of Dostoievski and Oppenheim. The Cliveden "line" had led him toward the Axis. Superficially the country's economic predicament justified it. And it looked more and more as if Hitler would win; one must climb on the bandwagon. It was the Stoyadinovich-Nedich, Pétain-Laval game.

There is no doubt that Paul and Olga, Olga especially, had designs on the Karageorgevich crown. They would even the score with Alexander by preventing his son from becoming a real king. One cannot disregard the assumption of the Yugoslav circles in London during '41-'43 that the Nazis meant to enthrone Paul in a vassal Serbian or Yugoslav state within the "New Order." It is a curious fact that early in the morning of April 6, '41 when the Stukas suddenly roared over Belgrade, among the very first buildings to be utterly demolished was the palace on Dedinyé Hill just outside the city in which the young king usually slept. Stuka after Stuka dropped its bomb load on the palace, pulverizing it, killing some thirty servants and guards, everyone who was there. With Paul out of the country by then, the Germans did not know that for several nights young Peter had been sleeping in Paul's "White Palace," only a thousand feet away. No bombs fell on that building, beneath which was the only up-to-date bomb shelter in the country. . . . This, at any rate, is the gist of an anonymous little pamphlet *Prince Paul of Yugoslavia* published "for

private circulation only" by a highly reputable London house in '42 in a limited edition of one hundred copies. The authors were two young Serbians, one an adjutant to King Peter, the other minister of his court. Copies were distributed among "important" Britishers whose confidence in Paul, though shaken by his attempt to lead Yugoslavia into the Axis fold, was not dispelled. Half a dozen copies found their way into the United States. Later, however, the responsibility of having accused a Karageorgevich of participation in a regicide plot frightened the authors who tried frantically to get hold of the pamphlets and destroy them. They were not entirely successful. In its March 27, '43 issue, *Yugoslavia,* a little journal edited by Vaso Trivanovich and published in Ridgefield, Connecticut, reprinted it in full. . . .

But this is a trifle in the complicated situation that developed in Yugoslavia in the first months of '41.

Early in March the prince-regent went to Berchtesgaden. Hitler told him (Paul later mentioned it to a few people in Belgrade) that he planned to attack Russia in May. And he wanted Yugoslavia to become a spoke in the Axis wheel right away in order to help it roll over Greece. Soon von Ribbentrop would present to Tsvetkovich and Tsintsar-Markovich for their signature the Tripartite Pact, and there must be no dilly-dallying.

This piece of Nazi "diplomacy" created a furor, and newspapers in the United States carried such headlines as "HITLER PUTS SCREWS ON YUGOSLAVIA."

By mid-March the Yugoslav crisis was full-blown. Two prechanski-Serbian members of the Belgrade regime resigned in protest against the inner group's determination to accept the pact. They were Sergjan Budisavlyevich, an Independent Democrat, and Branko Chubrilovich, an Agrarian. Neither was a big man, but they acted in agreement with their party co-leaders, the most intensely anti-Axis among whom was Sava Kosanovich, secretary-general of the Serbian Independent Democrats. Followed by a manifesto, these resignations were of incalculable importance. They touched off something in the depressed people and gave them the idea that perhaps they were not completely leaderless.

Vice-premier Machek absented himself from cabinet sessions. Among the other key members of the government, Premier Tsvetkovich, Foreign Minister Tsintsar-Markovich and Minister of War Pesich who represented no one but Paul, and the Reverend Anton Kulovets and Mikha Krek, the present Slovenian Clerical leaders

(Koroshets having died the year before), were ready to sign. They had a majority. And in their own eyes these men were not traitors. Their support of Paul's decision to make the country a German vassal state had a powerful extenuation: Yugoslavia was in no position to resist and Hitler could smash her far more easily than he had smashed Poland.

And, even if absent from cabinet sessions, Machek and most of the other Croatian leaders shared this point of view and, in effect, favored the pact.

Part of the Nazis' "diplomatic" squeeze was due to the fact that they had to go through Yugoslavia in order to help their impotent Italian allies fight the Greeks. In return Serbia would get the Greek port of Salonika, which had been eyed covetously off and on by some pan-Serbians whose imperialism harked back to Emperor Dushan the Mighty.

This sickened the overwhelming majority of Serbians and other Yugoslavs. Would Belgrade really go so far as to sell out the heroic Greeks?

In Britain most of the Cliveden Set was inactive or underground by now; Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden were in control. And in Yugoslavia British agents—the old ones, headed by the gentleman deep in Rumanian oil—had been working for some time with native agents in the service of Britain and with unpaid Anglophiles, especially those in the army, trying to hit on a way to frustrate Paul's scheme, for which they themselves were partly responsible. But around March 20th the situation looked very bad indeed.

On March 19th Foreign Secretary Eden sent a note to Foreign Minister Tsintsar-Markovich warning him of the consequences of joining the Axis. Four days later Paul found on his desk a message from Prime Minister Churchill: "If Yugoslavia were at this time to stoop to the fate of Rumania, or commit the crime of Bulgaria, and become an accomplice in the assassination of Greece, her ruin will be certain and irreparable. She will not escape but only postpone the ordeal of war, and her brave armies will then fight alone after being surrounded and cut off from hope and succor."

But, having decided as far back as December '39 that Hitler would win and seeing nothing in the war picture to change his mind, Paul only smiled faintly at Churchill's strong words.

In the evening of the 24th his two stooges, Tsvetkovich and Tsintsar-Markovich, put on their striped pants and tall hats, zipped up their

brief-cases and went to the station to entrain for Vienna, where von Ribbentrop awaited them with the Tripartite Pact. But they discovered that the crew of the official government train was on strike in protest against the signing of the pact. It took hours to round up a substitute crew.

The next day the ministers signed . . . and experts on international affairs were almost unanimous: the luckless state of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians was done for. A few hinted that it had never been any good anyhow. It had been created by the unfortunate Treaty of Versailles. Now deep-running internal political antagonisms made Yugoslavia a pushover. And some of the pundits, unwittingly playing the Goebbels game, implied that the surrender of another Balkan state would not much affect the vast world disaster anyway.

On the surface it seemed unrealistic to expect a small country with an obsolete army to refuse the pact and invite the Nazi *Luftwaffe* and panzer divisions to do their worst. But many Americans of Yugoslav origin were dead sure that the people would find a way of saying "No!"

The announcement that the Belgrade regime had signed the pact was followed by a depressing lull in news. Hitler was having it his way after all. German troops would go through Yugoslavia to invade Greece. . . .

Then came the climax of March 27th.

On March 25th children in different parts of the country started to pound their school desks, to shout and chalk on blackboards and walls insulting remarks about the Belgrade regime and Hitler. Grim-faced peasants poured into the capital. Some had guns under their cloaks. They were summoned by no manifesto, no organized call. They followed an instinctive revolutionary urge. The humiliations that Hitler and their own government were trying to impose on them was more than they could bear.

City folk mingled with them. Most of the Belgrade populace was always deeply democratic and often dared to defy the dictatorship openly in the streets, while most of the anti-*diktatura* politicians were in their foxholes. . . . Small crowds moved about or stood in the streets, quietly. No speeches. People hummed old Serbian songs, at once sad and joyful, full of meaning beyond translation, but saying in effect that sometimes your country comes to such a pass that it is your lot to die in the interests of life.

It was the eve of the Battle of Kossovo all over again. Only now there was no Prince Lazar; the prince in Belgrade was on the side

of the enemy. Here was the gray falcon again; only now the fateful bird hovered over the people. But his question was still the same: which do you choose—to live a living death within Hitler's "New Order" with the illusion that Salonika belongs to you, or to die so that eventually someone on this soil may live in freedom?

These alternatives confronted the Yugoslav peoples at a time when Hitler was the absolute master of Europe, when only Churchill's Britain had not yet been utterly broken in battle, and it was doubtful whether she could hold out, when the United States and Russia were still neutral, when isolationism and appeasement seemed about to win out on the American continent, and when there was little faith in the world that brutality was not going to triumph. . . .

The mood to resist at the risk of sacrificing themselves seized the people in many parts of Yugoslavia. The train carrying Tsintsar-Markovich and Tsvetkovich to Vienna was stoned as it sped through Slavonia, Croatia and Slovenia. But there is no doubt that the spirit of resistance was strongest in Serbia. It had been dimmed for years; now by the evening of March 26th it blazed up in Belgrade.

Twenty-four hours later part of the Belgrade garrison staged a *coup*. Troops commanded by young officers who looked like "avenging angels" occupied strategic points in the city. . . . Paul's government was forced out.

"The next day, the 28th," an eyewitness told me, "all of us, even those who had nothing to do with the putsch, experienced an indescribable ecstasy. It was beautiful early-spring weather; crowds jammed the streets of Belgrade. People danced, sang, laughed. Strangers and political adversaries embraced joyfully. We all knew it was the end, but we were terribly happy.

"We knew that in equipment our army was no match for Hitler's, and he would strike at any moment. But people said: 'Whatever befalls us will be better than the disgrace of letting Nazi troops go through Yugoslavia to finish off the Greeks.' Others said: 'Right will prevail in the end.'—'You cannot fail if you stand up against infamy and for what is right, even if you die. Others will live after you.' "

Thus the people felt and spoke in their own way and words.

The news flashed over the bleak anti-Axis lands. It was badly garbled, superficially reported, but that did not matter. It was the best news of the war so far. The passion for freedom, the spirit of man, still lived. The light that blazed up in Belgrade dazzled the world.

But behind the luminous event, there was continuous political conniving, opportunism and stupidity. The *whole* past, good and bad together, and most of it was bad, began to vibrate in this moment. As soon as the people in their inner strength had made their Lazar-like choice, all the South-Slavic weaknesses converged on the "Field of Kossovo," which now was Belgrade and the entire country called Yugoslavia.

What had actually happened?

Nicholas Mirkovich, a native of Serbia living in the United States, made a close study of the available documentary material, then wrote an objective account in the October '41 *Foreign Affairs*. The signing of the pact, he says, produced "a popular revolt in the truest sense of the word, so profound and general that it deserves to be called a revolution. In this respect the *coup d'état* . . . was forced by the people and was not the result of a military conspiracy."

A loose, tentative military conspiracy had existed before the popular upheaval. The man directly in charge of it was one of the youngest generals in the army, an airman, Bora Mirkovich (a distant relative of Nicholas). He was anti-pact along with all other air-force officers, and he was being egged on by British agents and desperate Greek patriots, but he had no political instinct, was no people's leader, and till the 25th of March most of the men around him were afraid of their daring idea. Then the movement in the streets of Belgrade and the news of similar demonstrations elsewhere gave them heart. At the same time urgent diplomatic representations came from Greece, Turkey, Britain and the United States. "The resolutions adopted by various organizations of Yugoslav immigrants in the United States and the British dominions," says Nicholas Mirkovich, "also had an influence."

On March 25th, while his ministers were signing the pact in Vienna, Prince-Regent Paul, head in hands, had said to the American Minister Arthur Bliss Lane, "This is the most unhappy day of my life." In the evening of the 27th he and his family were enroute to his castle at Berdo, in Slovenia, only half an hour by automobile from the German border—just in case. But events in Belgrade moved faster than his train. In the middle of the night he was stopped in Zagreb, arrested and told he would be taken back to Belgrade.

The change in the Belgrade regime was made at two o'clock that night when young Peter was elevated to full-fledged kingship,

although not yet eighteen—the age at which his father's testament and the constitution provided that he should ascend the throne. Tsvetkovich and Tsintsar-Markovich with one or two other appeasement ministers had already been arrested. There was almost no violence, no bloodshed; it was a well run *coup*.

Because Bora Mirkovich was only a brigadier and conscious of his own political inadequacy, he and the officers who were closely associated with him in the *coup* had asked General Dushan Simovich, chief of the air force, to take over-all charge of it. Perhaps Simovich's chief reason for agreeing to do so was that he hated Paul. Madame Simovich had laughed at him that evening when he told her he would have to stay up to lead a revolution. "*You* lead a revolution!"

Here is the gist of reports on Dushan Simovich by six men, four of them Serbians, who have known him at close range for at least four years each between 1925 and '42:

Simovich was extremely ambitious. An egotistical, limited man, he never forgave a slight or an injury. Four of the reports mention a Colonel Radovich, a prechanski Serbian with whom Simovich had long been at odds; over what, no one apparently ever knew. Radovich was the sort of man who took things on the chin and never discussed his troubles. He had entered the Serbian army in '14 and was well known as a good officer, scrupulously honest. He spoke six languages and was a brilliant military-aeronautical engineer. Soon after Simovich became chief of the aviation force, he began to "ride" Radovich. In '37 a General Yankovich remarked in the presence of several officers, "What Simovich is doing to Radovich exceeds all limits. I think someone should do something about it."

Radovich did something—he quit the army. The Czech firm "Avia" wanted him to represent them in Yugoslavia. Simovich promptly informed them that no concern which engaged Radovich would get one dinar's worth of orders from the Yugoslav air force. Although there were very few aero-technicians in the country, Radovich was out of a job till '40. Then, for some reason, the ex-officer attracted Prince Paul's attention and presently he was made director-general of a steel plant in Zenitsa. Simovich was furious, but he took good care to conceal it from the prince-regent.

In '38 Paul made Simovich chief of the general staff, a position which he held until January '41. Never was the army, steadily declining as a fighting force, more disorganized than under him. In the fall of '39, when he suddenly ordered a mobilization following

Hitler's invasion of Poland, the confusion in some of the divisions reached incredible proportions. Near Karlovats and Osiek, in Croatia, the quartermaster system broke down and soldiers mutinied because they received no food and had not been billeted in spite of rain. The Karlovats regiment scattered through the countryside. General Simovich blamed the occurrence on Communist propaganda and ordered a drastic disciplinary campaign against the hungry soldiers, most of them Croatians. Over a hundred were killed and several hundred wounded, and the army's morale, already depressed, hit bottom.

It was then that General Nedich was made minister of war—presumably on the extreme insistence of some of the more or less sound elements in the army who regarded him as a strong man and were not aware of his pro-Axis orientation. He kept Simovich as chief of general staff.

Between March 15th and 24th, '41, Simovich twice called on Paul and on both occasions, while mentioning the restlessness in the air force over the government's pro-Axis policy, agreed with him that the Yugoslav army was in no position to resist Hitler; there was only one thing to do—give in. Thus Simovich helped the prince-regent to justify the signing of the Tripartite Pact. At that time he did not know that General Mirkovich and his fellow conspirators had selected him to lead the revolution against the pact.

Most of the younger officers in the anti-Paul conspiracy were sheer idealists. Among them were also men who were anxious for anything which would break the intolerable situation inside the army. And finally a few who were ambitious and shrewd thought that a successful putsch might open opportunities for them. It was they who wriggled to the top in the confusion that followed Paul's overthrow, constituting themselves the king's staff, practically capturing him.

After the completion of the *coup*, so far as I know, General Bora Mirkovich played no role in Yugoslavia. On April 17th he escaped to Egypt; early in '43, at odds with the Yugoslav government-in-exile, he quit the Yugoslav army and became a general in the R.A.F. . . .

The opportunistic "realists" among the conspirators, those closest to Simovich, had no faith in the plot until March 26th when they saw the people turn against Paul. By then very little time remained for figuring out exactly what they would do after they got into power. British agents had not thought ahead in detail either.

A few hours before the putsch it occurred to Simovich and his aides that if the formation of a new government under King Peter II was announced simultaneously with the opening of telegraph and telephone lines to foreign correspondents, an impression of efficiency, strength and solidarity could be made.

The boy-king gave Simovich the mandate to organize a government. Simovich rounded up an assortment of politicians who had been in sporadic opposition to Paul's regime in recent years and by four o'clock he had all the Serbiyantsi he needed. Budisavlyevich, Chubrilovich and Kosanovich were the logical prechanski Serbians to be included in the cabinet. To present a picture of unity, Simovich thought he had to have a few anti-Paul Croatians and Slovenians. But none were to be found in Belgrade, and Zagreb and Lublyana were far away. So at five in the morning army officers knocked on the doors of Slovenian and Croatian politicos who had supported Paul right along—the Slovenian Clericals, as mentioned before, had voted for the Tripartite Pact three days earlier. They were asked which they preferred: to enter the new government of General Simovich or be arrested.

The Slovenian Clericals eagerly joined the new government.

The Croatians held back. Although they had not voted for the pact, they had not resigned because of it; they merely had not attended the meeting. Now honest, slow-moving old Machek wanted time to think things over, talk with some of his lieutenants. An Axis invasion was almost certain, and he knew that, with flat Voyvodina, the lowlands of Slavonia and Croatia, which bordered on Hungary and Germany, were geographically unprotected, and would be overrun; nothing could stop the *Wehrmacht*. It would be Belgium, Holland and France all over again; only faster and worse. But, said Machek to his confidants over and over again, he was not worrying primarily about Croatia. His main concern was for Serbia. Croatia would get Anté Pavelich as quisling, which was going to be bad enough. But on the Serbians Hitler would spill his hottest wrath. He would blame them for upsetting his Balkan applecart, and probably treat them worse than he was treating the Jews and Poles.

Could anything be done to hold off the invasion? Machek was trying to think as he talked; slowly, unexcitedly, in his Croatian way. . . . He worried about a number of other things. This putsch, for instance. What, he said in effect, would prevent another and still another? Then what chance would there ever be for an orderly, constitutional process in South-Slavic countries?

And who were these young army officers who had attached themselves to the king? A trio of majors known to be pan-Serbian chauvinists. Zhivan Knezevich was one of them. His brother Radoyé, a civilian, was the new minister of the court, that is, the man actually in charge of the king. . . . All this looked very bad to Machek and his Croatian and prechanski-Serbian political and personal friends.

And what about the Croatian home-rule Sporazum? On this last point Machek was extremely suspicious, for the serbiyanski politicians entering the new government were all anti-Sporazum, although for the moment they were keeping mum.

Machek spent a week in Zagreb consulting with his co-leaders. It took them that long to come to a decision.

Simovich, however, could not wait. He had to have Machek, regardless of his past relationship with Paul, for the Croatian Peasant Party undoubtedly controlled or reached eighty-five percent of the Croatian population. Without him there would be no unity. So in the morning of March 28th the new premier simply announced Machek as his first vice-premier. The rest of the government included:

Second vice-premier: Professor Slobodan Yovanovich, Serbian historian, lately very active in the Serbian Club, a holding company of serbiyanski politicians of various parties who were secretly up in arms about the Croatian Sporazum.

Third vice-premier: the Reverend Anton Kulovets, Slovenian Clerical, a still lesser man than the late Koroshets. But he achieved martyrdom by being among the first to perish when the Stukas attacked Belgrade on April 6th. Mikha Krek succeeded him to the third vice-premiership and Frants Snoy became the Number Two Slovenian in the government, without a portfolio.

Foreign minister: Momchilo Ninchich, the Radical and pan-Serbian centralist who had been foreign minister under Pashich; the old friend not only of Count Carlo Sforza, but also of some of the Fascists then in power in Rome. In fact, he got the foreign portfolio because of his fine connections in Italy.

Minister of War: General Bogolyub Ilich, a Simovich man.

The other portfolios and the ministries without portfolio were distributed among Milan Grol and Bozha Markovich, serbiyanski Democrats; Misha Trifunovich, an old Pashich Radical; Milan Gavrilovich, a serbiyanski Agrarian; Branko Chubrilovich; Bogolyub Yevtich and Yovan Banyanin, both of the Yugoslav National Party; Yurai Kernyevich, secretary-general of the Croatian Peasant Party, and another Croatian, Yurai Shutey, who became finance

minister; Mikha Krek; and Sergjan Budisavlyevich and Sava Kosanovich. The last two were the best of the lot as to sound political records and intrinsic personal qualities.

On April 4th after Simovich had assured him that the Serbians would not try to abolish home-rule in Croatia and that the new government would do everything possible to avoid war, Machek consented to come into the cabinet. This led some American and British correspondents to accuse him (and the Croatians generally) of being pro-Nazi. As we have seen, Machek was nothing of the sort. (Nor were the overwhelming majority of Croatians.) He was merely part of the element which believed that resistance to Hitler would be hopeless, pointless and disastrous. And he was sincere in worrying more about Serbia than Croatia.

Machek's insistence that the government attempt to avoid war was superfluous. With but two exceptions—Kosanovich and Budisavlyevich—the government had tried its impotent best to pursue that policy for seven days before Machek got to his first cabinet meeting. Since March 28th, when it was decided upon by a majority of the government, this policy had been in the personal charge of Premier Simovich, Vice-Premier Yovanovich and Foreign Minister Ninchich, all Serbiyantsi. For some strange reason Ninchich kept Washington informed about it. Belgrade, he emphasized, was anxious to adhere to the Tripartite Pact. He ignored the fact that that had been the ostensible issue for the overthrow of Paul, Tsvetkovich and Tsintsar-Markovich. In Washington, in a speech before the Press Club on April 10th Minister Konstantin Fotich boasted that under the new government Yugoslavia had done its level best to appease Hitler, and he quoted cables from Ninchich, photostatic copies of which are before me. They are signed by the legation's decoding officer.

Premier Simovich seemed to have hoodwinked the British agents; suddenly they could not do anything with him. General Sir John Dill, the British chief of staff, wanted Simovich to come to Athens for talks with him and the Greeks, but he would not budge from Belgrade lest Hitler be provoked. The British succeeded only in getting the new government to turn over to them the potential quislings, Paul Karageorgevich and Milan Stoyadinovich, whom Simovich also feared. They shipped Paul to Kenya Colony in East Africa and Stoyadinovich to Mauritius, a British island in the Indian Ocean.

The Belgrade government issued two statements to the effect that the change from Paul to Peter was a purely internal Yugoslav matter without international implications.

On April 4th and 5th the main discussion at the cabinet meetings was: should or should not Yovanovich and Ninchich go to Berlin and Rome, respectively, to try to convince Hitler and Mussolini that the Simovich government wanted above all else an "honorable" cooperation with the Axis if they would only be so kind as to make it possible. In this discussion, the degradation of South-Slavic "leadership"—on a par with most European "leadership"—touched bottom.

Yovanovich and Ninchich were scheduled to journey to the Italian and German capitals on Monday April 7th.

On Palm Sunday April 6th Hitler struck. Bombs killed some thirty thousand people that day in Belgrade alone. It was Rotterdam all over again.

During the ten days of its existence before the invasion, the inner group of the Simovich government, pursuing in its own way the old appeasement policy, did next to nothing to prepare the Yugoslav army to make a stand. There was no general mobilization; very little troop movement. The chief thing Simovich and his minister of war were doing was replacing Paul's favorite officers. To the command of the Army of the South, responsible for keeping the Germans in Bulgaria from breaking through the mountain passes guarding the Vardar Valley, Simovich assigned—the pro-Axis General Milan Nedich.

Nedich did not bother to join his command; he waited in Belgrade, certain that the Army of the South, consisting of some four divisions, would be cut into ribbons by a single panzer division, and that German troops would soon arrive in the capital.

This was exactly what happened between April 6th and 9th.

Belgrade was seized at once.

Betrayed by their commanders, who had surrendered, Yugoslav soldiers and junior officers wept and cursed at Nazi tanks which after they once broke through paid no attention to them, but headed across the Vardar Valley toward the Greek border. No mines had been planted, no tank traps built. There were no effective anti-tank guns. There was not a single portable radio or walky-talky in the whole Yugoslav army. Soldiers in Old Serbia and Macedonia did not know what was going on anywhere else, but they feared that what was happening to them was happening to their comrades in the north. It was.

Over a hundred of the one hundred thirty-odd generals surrendered to the enemy during the first ten days; most of the rest in the ensuing

week. Except for one or two brigadiers, all were Serbians—so far had the grand heritage of the Serbian army degenerated during the Alexandrian and Pauline regimes. On the 17th, following Prime Minister Simovich's instructions which were issued unbeknown to the rest of the government, the chief of staff and the minister of war signed a capitulation order.

Where there were uncorrupted higher officers, the inadequately armed regiments and smaller units fought to the death—Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian alike. In battles around Varazhdin and Virovititsa two Croatian regiments were completely wiped out because they would not yield.

At the same time a good many Croatian soldiers showed no inclination to fight. They could not help sensing widespread incompetence, not to say treason, on the part of their superiors. Also, they had been shot at on Simovich's orders in the "mobilization" fiasco in '39, a few weeks after Croatia had been given home-rule. Many had had no time, no chance, to develop a passion for fighting in the Yugoslav army. They had been affected by appeasement.

The spirit of March 27-28th was a fighting spirit. It was clear and fierce; the spirit that had won at Kolubara. It was capable of the impossible, of dispelling confusion and curing the disruptive malady that had crept upon the people during the previous two decades—had there only been someone to bring it together, to give it political point. But among those who had jumped to the top in the tragic situation there was no one. Simovich, Machek, Ninchich, Kulovets, Krek and the rest were all indecision, weakness and alarm; were the past quaking in the presence of the coming moment, and they could do nothing but suppress the burning, unafraid spirit of the country. They suppressed it automatically, unconsciously. Desiring to avoid the inevitable battle and disaster, they were appeasement at its blind worst. . . . By March 30th the confusion of those in control spread down among the army and the people. Because adequate governmental leadership was wanting, what would have been a great tragedy heroically met turned into a sordid mess.

In the brief period between March 27th and April 6th the most active organized group in the country were the Gestapo-supervised Ustashi consisting of the scum of Croatia and of individuals from the German and Magyar minorities. The Axis had secretly equipped them with superior weapons, also with portable wireless outfits and loudspeakers capable of carrying the voice of the Fifth Column for miles. And as the Nazi-Fascist invasion began, Ustashi units sprang

out of the ground in Bosnia and Slavonia . . . and fell upon the retreating, bewildered, leaderless Yugoslav army, yelling the ancient Croatian slogans and invectives against the Serbians, and calling upon Croatian soldiers to join them. In their bewilderment, some responded.

It was Poland all over again, and Norway and Denmark, Belgium and Holland and France, Hungary and Rumania and Bulgaria. It was the tenth climax of the European situation which a writer had described in the *British Weekly* just prior to the outbreak of World War II:

"Europe is a madhouse. Its mind and soul are eaten up with a mania which is causing half the population to be engaged in the manufacture of death and the other half in devising measures for dodging it. . . ."

Perceiving the depth of the debacle, a million times worse than Kossovo, young officers shot their superiors, or committed suicide or begged their comrades to kill them. Lieutenant-Colonel Mazuranich, a Croatian from Novo, refused to surrender his arms; he shot himself in front of his battalion. Everywhere among the men retreating into high mountains there was weeping, shame and rage. Soldiers fired their obsolete pistols and rifles and even threw stones at the death-spitting Stukas overhead. . . .

Meanwhile, the Simovich government and the king and his conniving captors were in flight. Dashing toward airdromes in the southern part of Yugoslavia, their cars took the right-of-way on roads filled with humbler refugees.

Machek had announced that he belonged in Croatia, where he would stay and share his people's fate. He had given Banus Subashich permission to go into exile and instructed him to hold onto the Sporazum against elements in the Yugoslav government which were certain to try to annul it. He had delegated his vice-premiership to Yurai Kernyvich, secretary of the Croatian Peasant Party, who joined in the flight.

At the airfields in Montenegro and Herzegovina there was a wild rush for space on the planes which were to take the "leadership" of the South-Slavic peoples out of the country. Besides members of the government and their wives, there were numerous other serbiyanski politicos who joined in the scramble. One of them was General Pera Zhivhovich, Alexander's premier under the dictatorship.

Simovich and Madame Simovich and the king flew out of the country in the first plane while there was still an army in the field.

A few score of Yugoslav airmen had flown their planes to Greece and Cairo to keep them from Axis hands. Among them was the one-time colonel of the air force, Radovich, who had brought out a plane without a regular crew. As soon as Premier Simovich learned of his presence in Cairo, he resumed his persecution.

The government-in-exile stayed in Jerusalem awhile. Arguments and intrigues suffered no intermission. The pan-Serbian inner clique consolidated its position. They would go with the king to London. And to make matters there easier for themselves, they got part of the government and Banus-Viceroy Subashich to go "on a mission" to the United States.

Before the government left Jerusalem, Major Knezevich and his two fellow adjutants to the king, Majors Vohoska and Rozdalovsky, started to denounce the Croatians who demanded and got a re-endorsement of the Sporazum. They screamed that it was the Croatians' fault the army had collapsed so quickly. They yelled that the Croatians (meaning the Gestapo-equipped Ustashi) had stabbed the heroic Serbians in the back; they were traitors and should be exterminated.

This was the beginning of the pan-Serbian campaign against the Croatian people. By-and-by it reached into the United States, where it was promoted by people connected with the Yugoslav legation (later embassy) in Washington, to the confusion of nearly a million Yugoslav Americans, and to the detriment of the American war effort. . . .

Behind it was a powerful psychological compulsion. The Yugoslav army had always been a Serbian army under Serbian generals. Now it had collapsed like so many toy soldiers kicked at by a boy. But the Serbian politicians and officers could not face the fact that the disaster was largely their fault if it was anybody's. They would explain it by laying the blame on "Croatian traitors."

Later, as a corollary, they built up a Serbian hero leading a Serbian army. This was one of the deep-down motives behind the Mikhailovich hoax, which began under Simovich and was fostered by his successors in the premiership. A stunt concocted by agents of the British War Office and the pan-Serbian inner group of the Yugoslav government-in-exile, it must be put down as the latter's outstanding achievement.

The ministers in London and New York installed themselves in fine hotels. Their salaries ranging between eight and twelve hundred dollars a month, and expense accounts, were drawn from the sixty-odd million dollars belonging to the Yugoslav State on deposit in London and New York. King Peter, a student at Oxford, was paid over half a million dollars a year. A week after the collapse of Yugoslavia his mother, Queen Marie, requested the government-in-exile to give her a monthly allowance of twenty thousand dollars; she got ten.

Although the most cohesive group in the government-in-exile, the pan-Serbians intrigued against each other too. On January 12, '42 the Knezevich brothers and Slobodan Yovanovich pushed Simovich out. Yovanovich became premier; and it was then that Drazha Mikhailovich was named minister of war *in absentia.* Yovanovich made himself acting minister of war but, being an old man, he turned the work over to Major Zhivan Knezevich who thus became the actual minister of war outranking Mikhailovich, the newly-promoted general.

Tourists in the Balkans.

From the Washington Sunday Star

"WHO? ME?"

Manning in The Wilmington News

"WE BOTH OFFICIALLY DENY THIS IS HAPPENING"

From Daily Express, London

Copyright, 1941, in All Countries by Low

I Thought This Was The Mama Bear!

From the Washington Post

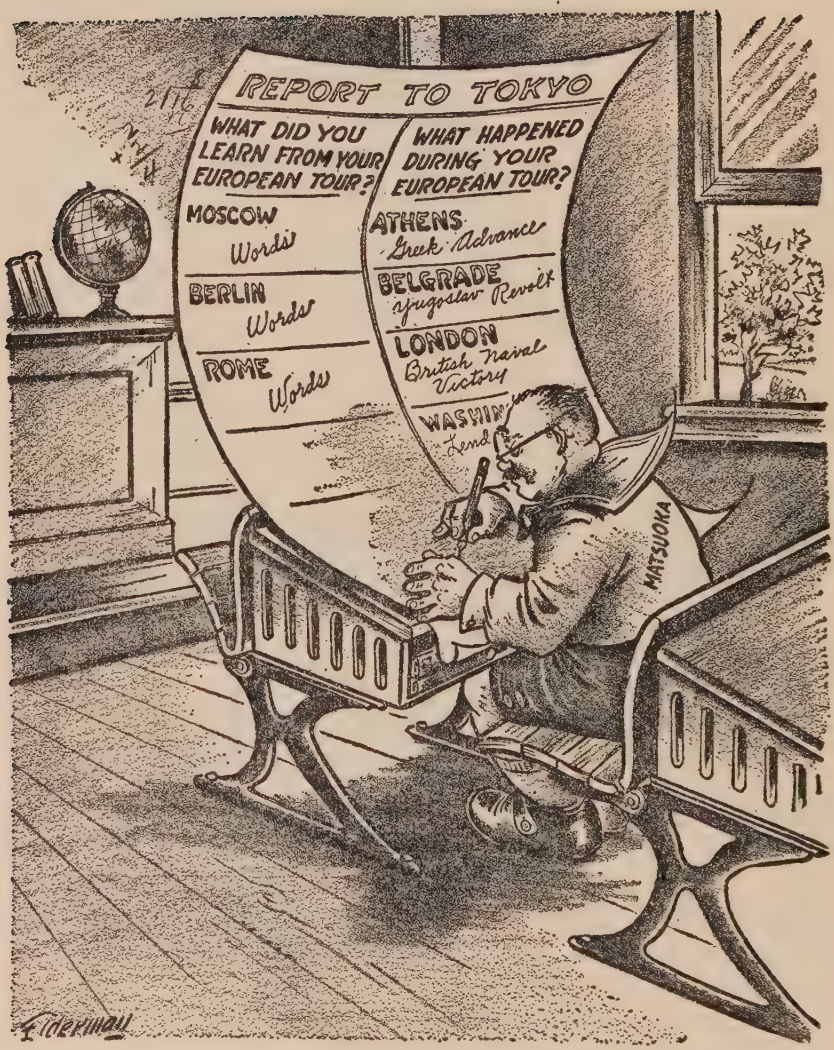
"STONE WALLS AND IRON BARS"

Jensen in the Chicago Daily News

BEFORE THE INK WAS DRY

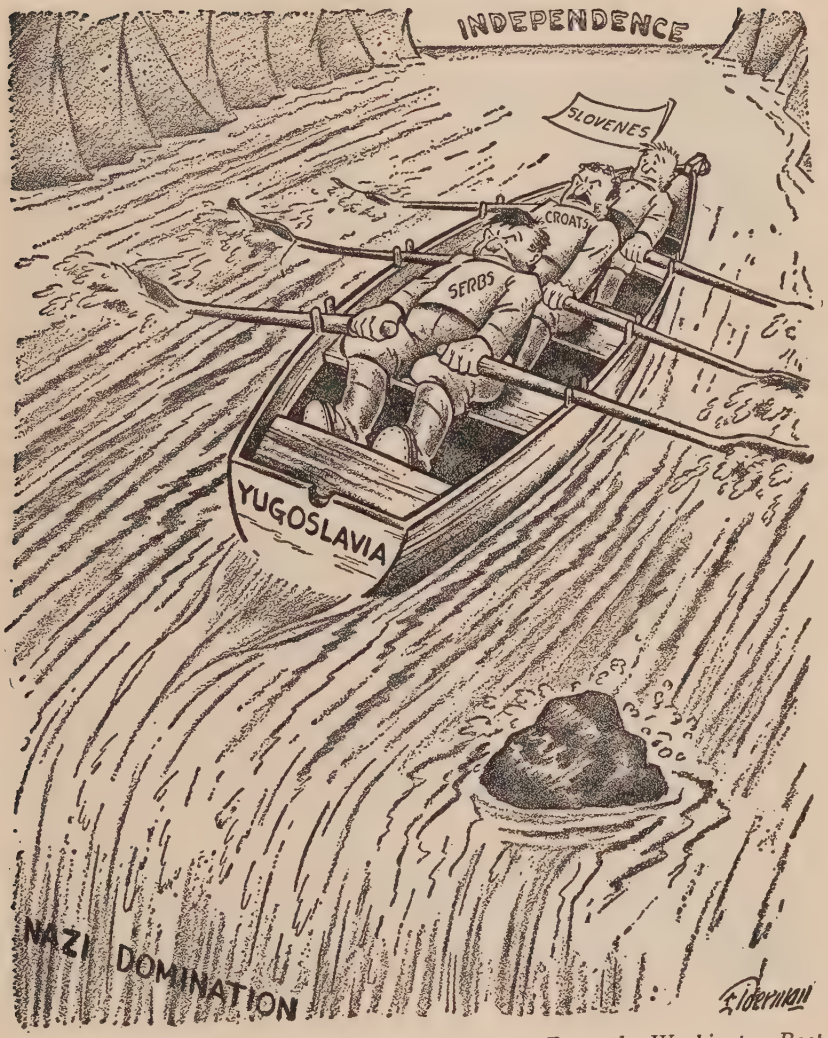
From the New York Post

Examination Time



From the Washington Post

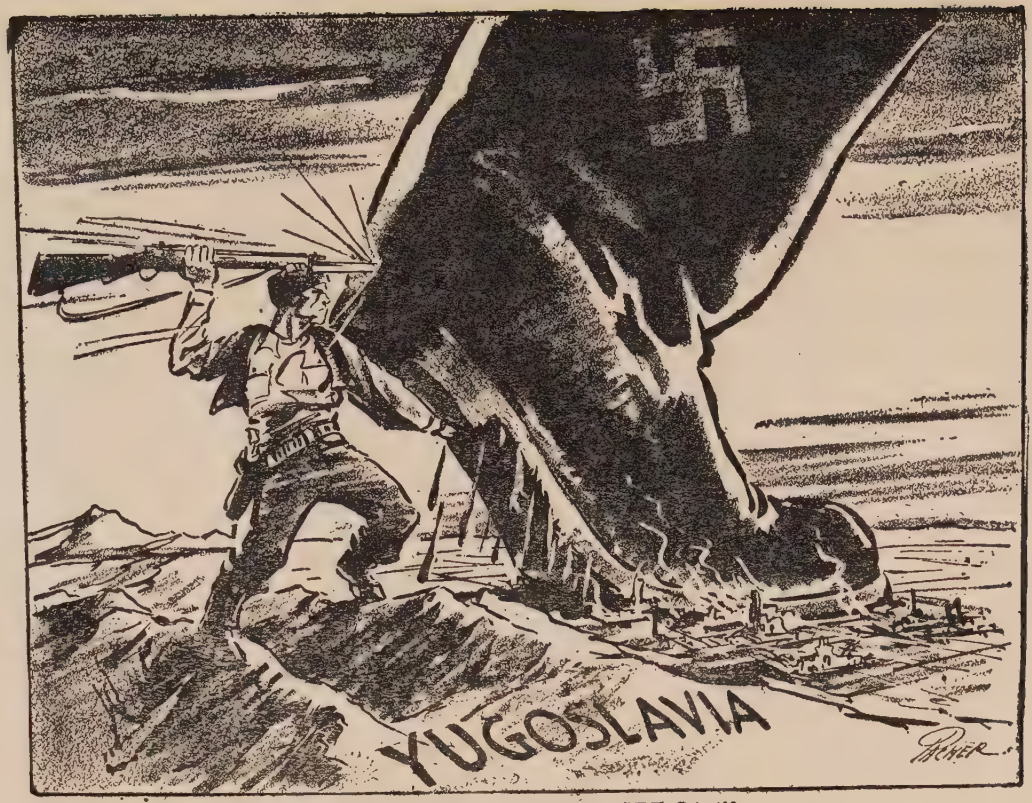
Pull One, Pull All!



From the Washington Post

The Great Warrior

From the Minneapolis Tribune



"THE ISLAND OF FREEDOM"

From the New York Daily Mirror

Yet Yugoslavia Was a Success

THE PICTURE I HAVE DRAWN IS NOT A PRETTY ONE. AS ONE WHO was born a Yugoslav, I find no consolation in the argument that the succeeding regimes in Belgrade were essentially no worse than the governments of other countries between the two wars, that all non-Axis governments had tried appeasement to the last moment; but it probably is worth noting. It can be argued that the inner group of the Simovich cabinet betrayed the people of Yugoslavia, especially the Serbians who had taken the initiative in saying "No!" to Paul and the Axis; but it is also true that April 6, '41 was only a little worse in Yugoslavia than December 7, '41 was at Pearl Harbor. What happened in Yugoslavia was worse because the people of that country had wanted to fight and the government had kept them from attacking the enemy; because the British Intelligence had informed Foreign Minister Ninchich on April 3rd that Germany would attack Yugoslavia in the morning of April 6th, but nothing was done about it. The excuse that Ninchich had not passed the information on to the rest of the government is no excuse.

But when all the negative facts are piled up, they topple over into insignificance alongside of Yugoslavia's positive contribution so graphically shown in the foregoing cartoons.

The Yugoslav "No!" of March 27, '41 had world consequences, and history may view that date as the beginning of Hitler's end. It forced the Nazi high command to delay the invasion of Russia, giving the Red Army five weeks' more preparation. By helping to stretch that campaign into the winter, it contributed to Hitler's vast Russian debacle. It also stiffened the attitude of Turkey and gave the British a chance to save the Middle East by gaining control over Syria and Iraq.

Very probably that emphatic "No!" affected Japan's foreign minister, Matsuoka, then Hitler's guest. It may have delayed Japan's

attack on the United States and given President Roosevelt precious months to key up the American war industry.

History is apt to regard that "No!" as a major contribution to the United Nations' victory . . . and as a prerequisite of Yugoslavia's own rebirth. For until March 25, '41, Yugoslavia had been dying, suffocating from lack of air within and from the pressure of outside forces.

In fact, as we have seen, Yugoslavia was never properly born. It had been conceived through an inevitable convergence of historical forces, but the midwives attending the birth had bungled their job.

Yet Yugoslavia was not a failure. March 27, '41 was the first proof that within the apparent failure was success. In spite of all the horrible blundering on top, Yugoslavia was a definite advance for the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians.

The collapse of the Turkish and Austro-Hungarian empires, in which the South-Slavs had been with the Czechs the deciding factor, was a world benefit. It was not the fault of the South-Slavic peoples that the world did not reorganize itself better at Versailles. Nor was it their fault that the new setup and the general world disintegration which followed helped to make their internal problems impossible of solution. The chief responsibility for that rests with the Great Powers.

But in spite of their mis-managed birth, in spite of Belgrade, in spite of the Great Powers, the Serbian and Croatian and Slovenian peoples developed a great many individuals who by '41 were keenly and intelligently aware that Yugoslavia was part of a world crisis. There were many people like Bozha and Bah-tch, like Josip Vidmar and Boris Kidrich, like "Marko," like Colonels Orovich and Radovich . . . in Slovenia . . . in Croatia . . . in Serbia . . . in Montenegro.

In spite of everything that happened between October 1918 and March 1941 there had been educational progress in many parts of Yugoslavia. And Andriya Stampar at least began his campaign for public health. . . . And Svetozar Pribichevich found himself and clarified his and the people's political ideas. . . . And Stepan Radich emerged as a great peasant leader stimulating a tremendous number of people toward political maturity. . . . And among the outstanding churchmen there had been a few who had tried to lessen the Catholic-Orthodox cleavage. Bishop Anton Bonaventura Yeglich of Lublyana, for one; a man, not beyond criticism in other respects, who had urged the country to "look for similarities rather than for differences in the two bodies of Christianity. Why continuously emphasize those things that separate us? Why not rather seek out common

ground? . . ."[9] Similar views had been expressed by occasional Croatian bishops and had been shared by progressive Orthodox priests and bishops.

In spite of everything, and because of it, there had been much intellectual ferment. True, most of it had been progress from disillusionment to disillusionment, but it was necessary. It was preparation, it crystallized rebels whose spirit was suddenly expressed in '36 by Desanka Maksimovich of Belgrade. Until then her ethereal and fluid poems had floated in nostalgia and daydreams; now—

Dearer than health and life
Dearer than anything in the world
Is freedom to us.
Swords and slaughter don't frighten us,
We do not fear a wound in the forehead.
The river's water
Carried our ancestors' heads
And hungry crows were flying down
Upon their skulls on the ramparts.

We will defend freedom at any cost
At the cost of the lives
Of our dearest brother and our only son.
We have been hardened by century-long pains
We are the descendants of those who barehanded
With hoes and hooks
Were rising against empires.

We will defend freedom.
Even if they drive spikes under our nails.
Even if the foe lights a fire on our chests.
We are not those who surrender,
Who bend themselves.
If anybody touches our wasp nests,
For our sacred ire
The whole world will be too small.

At the cost of everything we'll defend freedom.
They may impale us on the stakes before temples,
Lift us on thin gallows,
And shoot us perfidiously at dawn.
We have been plowed out of fields soaked with blood,
We have sprouted forth in the land of rebellion and revolt,
We are a proud people of haiduks.[10]

To feel this way in the Europe of '36 was high achievement; and that was exactly how hundreds of thousands of Yugoslavs felt. Many did not bother with the economic details of the Balkan future. They simply knew in their bones that the Balkan peoples must extricate themselves from the simultaneously heavy and subtle apparatus of Western imperialism. There was but one way to do that—to go the way of Russia; to work out a procedure whereby "backward" nations and their undeveloped resources would be withdrawn from the reach, from the sphere, of intrigue and "prestige" of the predatory and in the long run incompetent Great Powers of the West. Perhaps a few Yugoslavs felt that this had to be done not only for the sake of the Balkans, but also for the sake of the peoples of the imperialist countries: for imperialism, the exploitation of other lands, was as bad for them as for the exploited states. It led them into degeneration; made them Hitler's prey. . . .

Some of the children of Yugoslav disillusion joined the Communist Party; some did not. But in or out of the party, they all knew that a catastrophic collapse was impending. Talking in their rooms, talking while hiking in the country and climbing mountains, writing letters to one another and articles and poems for little magazines, they had tried to see through the failure and beyond the encompassing disaster about to crash over their heads.

As a reaction to the Alexandrian and Pauline periods, hundreds of thousands of educated and uneducated people—teachers, workers, lawyers, doctors, peasants, some priests and army officers—saw that the nationalist "revolution" of 1918 had not been enough even as a beginning; that nationalism when carried to extremes was dangerous as a basis for political programs; that, no less than the feudal state of old, Yugoslavia had been put together from the top down; that after the imminent crash of this "civilization" social emancipation was necessary. They realized that the Kralyevich Marko heroism, with its lapses into compromise, had kept them alive and preserved their values up to the early decades of the twentieth century. But now events demanded a new kind of heroism—the heroism of those who passed or would be willing to pass through the Glavnyacha, whether they were Communists or any other kind of social revolutionaries.

Old-timers talked of *svoboda,* freedom. But—freedom from and for what? One had to eat, to be educated, in order to function in freedom.

Old-timers talked of past heroism; of "heroic Serbia," of "heroic Montenegro," of the time they had spent in Austro-Hungarian jails

. . . but the new people, the Bah-tches and Bozhas, knew that such talk, harking back, resting on the withered laurels of the past, was a sure sign of decadence, of minds only half alive. One of them, writing in the June '38 *Slovenska Mladina* (Slovenian Youth), said: "From current disillusionment there are only two ways we can go: to chaos or to a new faith which only we ourselves, the generation which is still young, can develop. . . . there is no salvation outside of ourselves. . . . Our responsibility is terrible; we cannot evade it. . . . We must be frank. Young as we may be, we are not blameless for what has happened and what is about to happen. It would be fatal for us to blame things on our elders. . . . We must analyze, decide, be ready. We are part of the youth of the whole world. . . ." These new people, foreseeing a break in the intolerable European situation, another great war involving the Balkans, sharpened their effectiveness in and out of the underground Communist Party. They got ready for the new Kossovo, determined to act on behalf of the people the moment it occurred, determined not to wait four hundred and fifty years as had the Serbians after 1389.

Nor even that many hours.

The new Kossovo came . . . and the New Slovenians, the New Serbians, the New Croatians—the New Yugoslavs—went into action at once. Mikhailovich, the unfortunate hero *manqué*, the tool of the worst element in Britain and in Yugoslavia, the helpless representative of the past, confused some of them for a while. But they soon recognized him. They saw that he was the same sort of patriot-blunderer and blind agent of amoral interests that had been around for over a thousand years. They broke away from him.

The Liberation Front, the day-to-day battles of the Partisans holding from twenty to thirty Axis divisions in Yugoslavia away from Africa or the Russian front, was the new heroism. It was not word-heroism, not a spiritual bootstrap, but heroism in action now —grim and demanding, crude and selfish in motive sometimes, but uncompromising and socially significant in deed, hurling itself against the errors of the past wherever they continued to function, breaking its fetters and releasing the energy belonging to the future.

The Future Is Here Now

The Yugoslav Nightmare Invades America

In March '41 when Hitler began to tighten the "screws on Yugoslavia," Konstantin Fotich came into the limelight in Washington. I asked around: besides being the Yugoslav minister to the United States, who was he—what sort of man?

Once upon a time his family name was Fota; before that, Fotos. He "looked Jewish," which gave him a not unusual psychological twist. His wife was the daughter of an upper-class Bosnian family which was pro-Austrian before 1919, sporting the aristocratic "*von*" in front of their name.

A career diplomat, Konstantin Fotich had a "charming" manner when he moved in "select" circles. But South-Slavic immigrants in the United States, plain people, industrial workers, preferred the democratic manner of most American officials and politicians. He used to visit "Yugoslav colonies" in New York, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco, but the preponderance of Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian Americans soon ceased to want him at their affairs.

There was only one immigrant group, about three dozen people in all, with whom Fotich was on close terms. They ran the Serbian National Union, a mutual-benefit society with headquarters in Pittsburgh. It published the daily *Serbobran* (Serbian Defender), whose pan-Serbian policy became more outspoken after Fotich came to Washington. The SNU executives included a former machine-shop worker in Pittsburgh, Branko Pekich, and a printer in Gary, Indiana, Louis Christopher, whose original surname was Kristoforovich. They were tied up with Bishop Dyonisie of the Serbian-Orthodox Church in the United States whose monthly salary check came from Fotich's legation; and with a narrow majority of the Serbian-Orthodox priests

in America. Together, back in '36, under the direction of people in the Yugoslav legation, they turned the SNU and most of the Orthodox Church organization into a propaganda machine for Premier Stoyadinovich, who had sent Fotich to the United States.

All this—and much else—I learned during the Hitler-provoked Yugoslav crisis in March '41; some of it from Vaso Trivanovich, an American citizen of prechanski-Serbian origin in New York, who had met Fotich in '35 when he arrived in the United States, but hadn't seen him since. Now "I was worried about my family in Belgrade," Trivanovich reported in a subsequent memorandum to the State Department. "They had publicly protested against the Tripartite Pact. If the Nazis entered Belgrade I was afraid they were doomed. I decided to call on Mr. Fotich. He received me cordially"—around March 20th—"and told me he had informed the State Department that he would resign if the Yugoslav government accepted the pact. . . . I asked him not to resign as long as the United States maintained diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia. He assured me, however, that the State Department would refuse to accept anybody in his place."

Fotich was a shrewd opportunist. His "charm" had sold him to Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Under-Secretary Sumner Welles, as well as to many other key people in Washington. They had come to regard him as an able man, which he was. He was always "correct." He knew the diplomatic game inside out. The fact that he was a Stoyadinovich appointee did not mar the esteem in which he was held by the State Department. He had emphasized that he was merely a career diplomat. Besides why would the high Washington officials who had favored Franco and furthered sending scrap to Japan discriminate against the appointee of a petty fascist like Stoyadinovich?

Evidently Fotich had good reason to believe that if he resigned in protest against Yugoslavia's signing the Axis pact, thereby turning against his master, Prince-Regent Paul, the United States would continue to recognize him as the representative of Yugoslavia. Had it not continued to recognize the Danish minister who had protested against the Nazi conquest of his unresisting country? That would put Fotich in direct and sole control of the Yugoslav millions deposited in the Chase Bank in New York. It might well lead to his becoming the head of a "Free Yugoslav" movement. He would, of course, need the aid of his friends in the State Department, for he knew that eventually the United States would be drawn into the war and would wield enormous power among the Allies. Then he might be *the* man in the Balkans.

With this in view, Fotich's publicity aide got Washington journalists whose syndicated columns appear in hundreds of papers to write of him as a great democrat who had always been at odds with the dictatorial regimes in Belgrade. There was no mention that he was a cousin of Milan Nedich and Dimitriyé Lyotich, the fascist feuhrers in Belgrade.

But Fotich's plans did not work out. Instead of yielding like Denmark, or going into the Axis fold like Hungary and Rumania and Bulgaria, Yugoslavia revolted; and on March 28th Fotich automatically became the enthusiastic minister of the "revolutionary" Simovich government.

Vaso Trivanovich and other Yugoslav Americans, full of joy over March 27th, told me that "Fotich looks all right now." They felt that henceforth we should forget the past and do everything we could for Yugoslavia. Whether we liked it or not, Fotich was her representative in the United States and all of us should work with him just as people like Hamilton Fish Armstrong, the editor-in-chief of *Foreign Affairs,* and Thomas J. Watson, president of the International Business Machines Corporation, were doing. I was not entirely sure this was the thing to do, but when it was suggested that I should get together with Fotich I said that if he wished to see me I was willing to meet him.

We met one day early in April '41 in his New York hotel suite, and he used up the first fifteen minutes of his monologue in flattery. Tragic Yugoslavia counted and depended on my "pen." Making no reference to *The Native's Return,* in which I had criticized the Belgrade dictatorship, he hoped I would cooperate henceforth. Then he proceeded to other matters, among them a tale about Count Carlo Sforza, who was becoming active in the United States as a great "liberal" and anti-fascist. . . .

A while after this the Greek War Relief people in New York, headed by Spyros Skouras, an outstanding figure in the film world, gave a luncheon for a group of Yugoslav Americans. In a simple and moving speech, Skouras said the Yugoslav revolution of March 27th was "the greatest relief Greece could have got." But now Yugoslavia would need relief too, and he and his assistants in the Greek War Relief organization, which had collected some seven million dollars in a few months, offered to help us set up a Yugoslav War Relief. We promptly formed a provisional committee.

Learning of this in Washington, Fotich took quick steps to quash

our plans. A day or two later he flew to New York and told us the State Department did not want any more foreign-relief organizations. Yugoslavia, he said, would get all she needed—guns, planes, food—through Lend-Lease and the Red Cross; of course the American government would handle all this through him. He had discussed it with President Roosevelt and the chairman of the Red Cross.

Result: as I write in mid-'43, the Greek Relief under a special international arrangement has been sending shiploads of food and medicine to starving Greece for over a year and has built up stockpiles for postwar shipment, all paid for with private donations of Greek and other Americans, while there is no Yugoslav relief action comparable to the Greek.

After the collapse of Yugoslavia, the Simovich government sent to the United States a platoon of additional diplomatic representatives. It was headed by one Radoyé Nikolich, a brother-in-law of the premier; he became first counselor in Fotich's legation. At that time no Yugoslav Americans had any clear notion of what had really happened during and after the *coup* of March 27th; and months later Vaso Trivanovich stated in his memorandum to the State Department:

"Anxious to be helpful to any representative of the revolutionary government of Yugoslavia, I invited Mr. Nikolich to my house together with three friends whom I thought he would like to meet. We spent about five hours listening to a violent attack on the Croatian people. Nikolich informed us that the Croatians did not know what it meant to have a state of their own, that they had betrayed Yugoslavia, that after the war the Serbians would kill a hundred Croatians for every Serbian killed by Anté Pavelich, and that the only postwar solution of the Yugoslav problem was a Serbian dictatorship which would teach the Croatians how to love the state. Nikolich said that he spoke in the name of General Simovich. The man . . . talked calmly and with an assurance which convinced me that he actually was expressing the views of the Yugoslav prime minister.

"A few days later I complained to Mr. Fotich about Nikolich's anti-Yugoslav attitude. Mr. Fotich did not like Nikolich, but he expressed no objection to his political views."

Another diplomat who arrived in the United States at this time was an elderly man named Yovan Duchich, a pan-Serbian poet and

a racist on the Nazi ideological pattern who regarded the Serbian people as the Balkan *Herrenvolk*. Stoyadinovich had sent him as the Yugoslav minister to Dictator Franco in Spain. But Duchich and his superiors in the Yugoslav government-in-exile had decided that he could do more effective work in the United States. In Gary, Indiana —a tiny hotbed of pan-Serbianism—he had a relative in the creamery business. He established himself there, making frequent trips to Washington and to Pittsburgh and other "Serbian colonies," where he held conferences and mass meetings. He wore himself out in this work and died early in '43.

And late in '42 there came also Banus Ivan Subashich of Croatia and the Royal Yugoslav Delegation consisting of four portfolioless members of the refugee government: Bogolyub Yevtich, ex-premier, ex-foreign minister, "Yugoslav nationalist," but really a Serbian chauvinist in an ineffective kind of way; Misha Trifunovich, a distinguished-looking man in his seventies, a Pashich Radical and chauvinist, a wind-bag inflated with the past; Bozha Markovich, a serbiyanski Democrat, a fine man in more ways than one; Branko Chubrilovich, Frants Snoy and Sava Kosanovich.

And trailing not far behind the Delegation were a few political relics from the Alexandrian period, among them ex-Premier General Pera Zhivkovich.

Fotich was beside himself. He knew that Simovich had little use for him because he had been one of Paul's men, looking out for the prince-regent's interests in the United States. The "revolutionary" premier did not dare replace Fotich because of the State Department's high opinion of him. So he sent all these people to Washington and New York partly to bedevil him. But another more direct reason was that Simovich had to send them somewhere. About two hundred officials high and low had escaped from the Yugoslav disaster; they had to be distributed through the Anglo-American world.

Fotich stormed. He wanted the State and Justice departments to send these newcomers out of the United States, and finally he succeeded in having a few of them temporarily deported to Canada.

Meantime, the Yugoslav legation staff was stringing out its anti-Yugoslav, anti-Croatian and anti-Slovenian line. When Banus Subashich arrived in Washington from Africa, Nikolich greeted him with the declaration that all Croatians ought to be exterminated. Subashich begged to be spared for the moment.

There were endless Serbo-Croatian incidents of this sort

The Mikhailovich story, as I have told, broke early in July '41; and the ensuing publicity—directed by Yugoslav officials in London, Ankara, Istanbul, Cairo and Washington, and aided by British correspondents who were also Intelligence agents and by American correspondents, at least one of whom was on the payroll of the Yugoslav government—stressed the fact that Drazha Mikhailovich was a Serbian, that Yugoslavia was an utter failure, that the Croatian and Slovenian peoples were traitors unworthy of any consideration, and that Greater Serbia was the only postwar possibility in the Balkans. The American press was filled with such propaganda, while Simovich and Ninchich and other members of the government-in-exile, and their envoys like Fotich in other capitals, occasionally mouthed statements about "Yugoslavia." This was necessary to maintain diplomatic correctness and to disarm the irate Croatian and Slovenian members of the Yugoslav government in London who kept reminding them that they were supposed to represent *Yugoslavia.*

Under the direction of Yovan Duchich and some "Yugoslav" legation officials in Washington, the newspaper *Serbobran* and the Serbian National Union in Pittsburgh became a center of Serbian chauvinism and its anti-Yugoslav, -Croatian and -Slovenian concomitants. Duchich wrote articles for the paper developing his Serbian super-race idea, in the light of which Croatians and Slovenians were rats, snakes and worms, and showing why and how the leadership of Serbia in 1916-'41 had made the grievous mistake of trying to work with inferior races.

In addition, the Eparchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the United States, headed by Bishop Dyonisie, increased its political activity.

In spite of the hatred some of these individuals in Washington and New York, Pittsburgh and Gary, felt for one another, they worked well together. Their propaganda was devilishly effective—especially from the early autumn of '41 when newspapers all over the United States published sensational reports from London that "the Croatians . . . the treacherous, pro-Nazi Croatians" had massacred 180,000 Serbians in Croatia and razed scores of their towns and villages. That was the first figure. Later it was raised to 390,000, then to eight hundred thousand, then to over a million.

The earliest reports of these atrocities were based on a statement by a pro-Nazi Serbian Orthodox bishop. They were indirectly vouched for by the Archbishop of Canterbury who expressed his shock over them. This looked bad.

At that time—late in '41, early in '42—I met occasionally with an informal group in New York which included Stoyan Pribichevich of *Fortune* magazine; Vaso Trivanovich; Nicholas Mirkovich, an economist lately of the University of California; and Frano Petrinovich, a Yugoslav patriot from Dalmatia whose business interests are in Chile, London and New York. As yet, we had almost no information on what was happening in Yugoslavia. We accepted the publicity about Mikhailovich himself; but we did not believe that his forces were "purely Serbian." Nor could we believe that the Croatian people had massacred Serbians *en bloc*. We thought that if such atrocities had occurred they were the work of the Ustashi and their Axis masters. But how to prove it?

Serbobran put a black border around its front page on which week after week, under various *noms de guerre*, Yovan Duchich and other officials of the Yugoslav government-in-exile called for the extermination of all Croatians. This resulted in a horrible schism in the Yugoslav immigrant group in the United States. Many Serbian Americans could not help believing the atrocity stories, especially since the Archbishop of Canterbury sponsored them. The overwhelming majority of Croatian Americans—totaling about eight hundred thousand compared to one hundred thousand Serbian Americans—could not believe the reports. Here and there physical blows were exchanged between individual Serbian and Croatian Americans working in Detroit and Pittsburgh defense (after Pearl Harbor: war) plants.

American leaders were calling for unity . . . *unity* . . . UNITY . . . but there was no doubt that this anti-Croatian publicity worked against American unity. Officials in the Offices of Facts and Figures and Coordinator of Information with whom I discussed the matter were baffled by it. They asked *Serbobran* to tone down. Their request did no good.

Vaso Trivanovich, in the presence of a witness, accused Fotich to his face of being directly responsible for *Serbobran's* divisive, un-American work. Always "diplomatically correct" when talking with more than one person, Fotich denied the accusation. As a man of Serbian birth Trivanovich demanded that Fotich stop "this subversive anti-Croatian campaign." Fotich twisted out of that corner by replying that he " 'could not interfere with the free expression of opinion of American citizens of Serbian origin,' " to quote again from Trivanovich's memorandum to the State Department. "I told him he could at least write a letter to the *New York Times* stating that per-

sons sowing dissension and hatred among Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians worked not only against the interests of Yugoslavia, which he represented . . . but also against the interests of the United States." But Fotich took "no steps to stop the subversive work of his friends in Pittsburgh," who repeatedly called on him in Washington.

Writing in the January '43 *Harpers*, Blair Bolles, a Washington journalist covering the State Department and the White House, described Fotich as "a Serbian Herrenvolk man, who uses his office as representative of three Yugoslav peoples to further the campaign against two of them, Croatians and Slovenians."

The late great American inventor born a Serbian in Croatia, Nikola Tesla (he died in January '43), protested against the activities of the Yugoslav legation's stooge organization, the Serbian National Defense, which had presumed to make him its honorary president. The Serbian-language anti-fascist paper *Slobodna Rech* (Free Word), published in Pittsburgh, fought the whole anti-Croatian and anti-Yugoslav drive. It did no good. The insanity went on.

The campaign reached its climax when Duchich and other Yugoslav diplomats released the "details" of the "Croatian" massacres of Serbians . . . such as that people in Croatian towns and villages were selling and wearing necklaces made up of the eyes of slaughtered Serbians . . . and that when trainmen at the station in Belgrade opened a box-car supposed to contain potatoes, which had just come from Croatia, they found it crammed with lopped off Serbian heads. This sort of thing appeared in *Serbobran* and in mimeographed circulars mailed from New York, in envelopes without a return address, to leading people in the United States. Many went to Protestant clergymen with the obvious aim of stirring up anti-Croatian sentiment through anti-Catholicism. Both in the *Serbobran* and in the anonymous circulars, there were hints and direct statements that Catholic bishops and priests in Croatia were behind the massacres; also that Catholic priests accompanied Ustashi massacre squads and gave Orthodox Serbians the choice of joining the Roman Catholic Church or being killed. . . .

What could we do? There just might be some basis for these horrible stories. . . . None of our little group in New York could get into occupied Yugoslavia to investigate the facts. The nearest we could get was London, the chief Allied way-station of this propaganda. Stoyan Pribichevich volunteered to go if the United States government and *Fortune* approved of his trip.

Arrangements were made . . . and Stoyan Pribichevich (a Serbian

Most of the photographs used in this portfolio were supplied by Kostich Photos, Astoria, N. Y.

A typical Slovenian valley (*See the chapter, "A Boy and His Village"*)

Slovenian Alps: A scene of anti-Nazi guerrilla concentrations from 1941-43

Before the war: Slovenian young people climbing Triglav Mountain (*See the chapter, "Love in Slovenia"*)

In Nazi-occupied Slovenia: The death of Milorad Stosich (*See the chapter, "One Man's Sacrifice"*)

The Reverend Dr. Lambert Ehrlich, a few minutes after he was assassinated by a Partisan "execution squad" in May, 1942 (*See the chapter, "Death in Front of the Church"*)

The center of Lyublyana, capital of Slovenia, with the Franciscan church and the monument to one of the leading Slovenian poets, Francé Presheren

A bird's-eye view of Zagreb, Croatia

A bird's-eye view of Skoplyé, South Serbia or Macedonia

The harbor of Split, Central Dalmatia

Fascist-Italian troops occupy Dubrovnik, Southern Dalmatia, in April, 1941

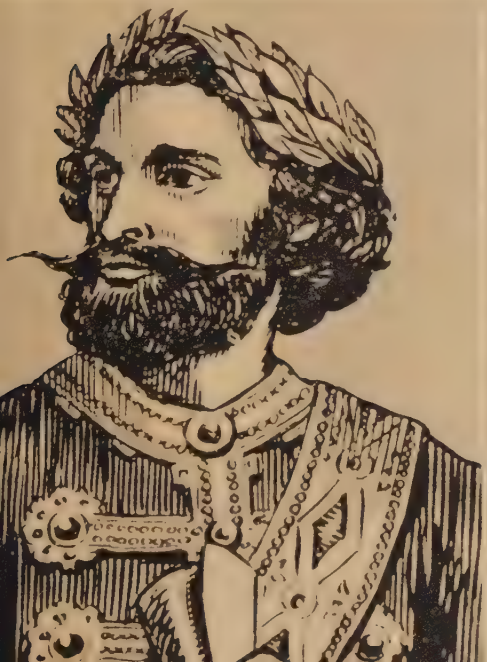
Religious diversity: the Serbian orthodox monastery of Visoki Dechani (*above*), and (*below*) a Moslem mosque in Sarajevo

Stefan Nemanya

St. Sava

FIGURES IN SOUTH-SLAVIC HISTORY

Dushan the Mighty



Primozh Trubar

Vuk Karadjich

Lyudevit Gai

Bishop Strossmayer

Bishop Peter Petrovich-Nyegosh

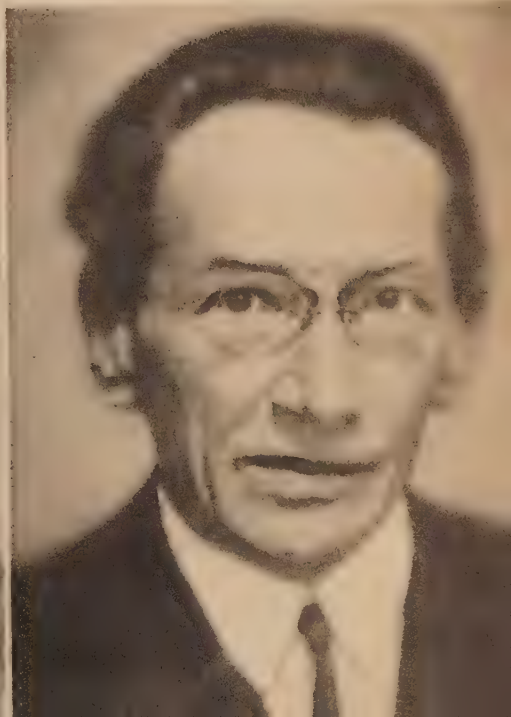
King Peter Karageorgevich I

Anton Koroshets

GOSLAV MOVEMENT

Ivan Cankar

Oton Zupanchich



King Alexander and Prince Paul who, after the king's assassination at Marseilles, became the prince-regent

King Alexander (*in the foreground*), Svetoza Pribichevich and Nikol Pashich

The brass hats of the Yugoslav Army, about 1931

Yugoslav infantry

King Peter II of Yugoslavia, after the popular upheaval on March 27, 1941. The new premier, General Dushan Simovich, is in the center of the picture

The Yugoslav Government-in-Exile in Jerusalem, April, 1941. *Standing:* Frants Snoy (see the chapter, *"Death in Front of the Church"*), Serdjan Budisavljevich, Mikha Krek, Milosh Trifunovich, Yurai Shutey, Milan Grol, Yovan Banyanin, Sava Kosanovich, Bozha Markovich, Branko Chubrilovich. *Sitting:* Bogolub Yevtich, Ivan Subasich, Yurai Kernyevich, Dushan Simovich, Slobodan Yovanovich, Momchilo Ninchich, Bogolyub Ilich

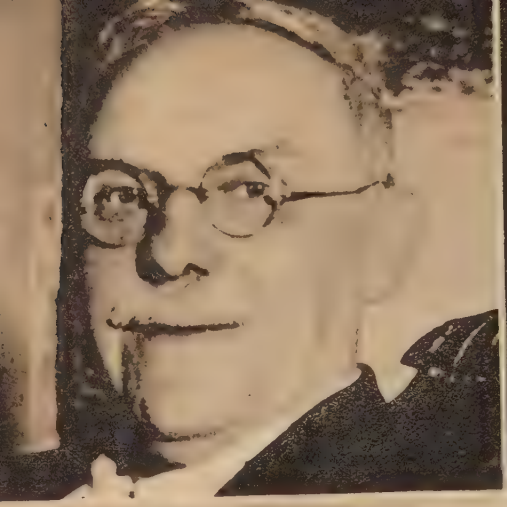
Konstantin Fotich, "Yugoslav" ambassador to the United States, with the former Premier-dictator, General Pera Zhivkovich, who became the "Yugoslav" minister of war in June, 1943, acting for Drazha Mikhailovich

King Peter receives a delegation of pan-Serbians in the United States, who came to express their loyalty to him. Most of them are supposed to be citizens of the United States. (*See the chapter, "The Yugoslav Nightmare Invades the United States."*)

A Belgrade street after the Stuka attack on Palm Sunday, April 6, 1941

Slovenian priests at forced labor under the Nazis in Maribor, Slovenia

The "technique of de-population"



FIGURES IN YUGOSLAVIA,
1941-43

Vladko Machek (*upper left*)

Vladimir Nazor (*upper right*)

Milan Nedich in the uniform of a Yugoslav general (*middle*)

Drazha Mikhailovich as he looked in the late 1930's (*lower left*)

Anté Pavelich in Ustashi uniform (*lower right*)

by origin, let me repeat; and a most careful and responsible journalist) went . . . and, after talking with most members of the government-in-exile and many other Yugoslavs in London, returned with information some of which at that time he reported to us only in tentative terms, but which was later confirmed. The following resumé includes facts learned and corroborated since then (some I have already discussed):

1. Large-scale massacres of Serbians in Croatia occurred. But the total number of victims was not anywhere near 180,000, the lowest figure previously reported. Reliable estimates from inside Yugoslavia were "tens of thousands." This was bad enough.

2. The massacres were not perpetrated by the Croatian people, but by the Ustashi under the command of Anté Pavelich and Eugen Kvaternik and Himmler's experts in the "technique of depopulation." In many places Croatians, outraged at what they saw happening, rose against the Ustashi and Gestapo and were themselves slaughtered or driven into the woods.

3. A good many Croatian priests, including one archbishop, supported the Ustashi before and after the Axis conquest of Yugoslavia. Some did so because they were that sort of men; some because they opposed the Croatian Peasant Party, which was implicitly anti-Clerical; some because they were anti-Orthodox or ultra-reactionary, fearing a Communist revolution after the war. And some Catholic priests here and there in Croatia accompanied Ustashi murder squads and "converted" thousands of Orthodox Serbians to Catholicism under the threat of death from Ustashi guns—much as the Spanish padres accompanying the conquistadores "converted" the Central- and South-American Indians.

4. Photographs of the massacres existed. I saw some of them. Some were horrible beyond utterance. There were pictures of vast piles of bodies, of stacked-up heads, tubfuls and necklaces of human eyes. But only a few looked authentic; it was clear that most of them were "arranged" by Gestapo photographers. In two or three of the pictures men in the garb of Catholic priests were among the Ustashis.

5. All or most of the pictures were taken by Gestapo agents who turned them over to Serbian Orthodox clergymen with such remarks as: "See what the Croatians are doing to the Serbians in Croatia." The Serbian priests reacted just as the Gestapo had expected. Some wellnigh went mad. They must get this information to the Serbians in the government in London as soon as possible! The Gestapo helped to arrange this. A Serbian messenger named Sekulich got

out of Axis-occupied Yugoslavia with a German and a quisling-Nedich passport, reached Turkey, and gave the photographs, the report of a puppet bishop to a German general named Dunkelmann, and other "documents" (all Gestapo-approved) to the Yugoslav diplomatic officials in Istanbul. The material was then rushed to London by the same courier, Sekulich, now traveling on a Yugoslav passport. British authorities arrested him on suspicion of being a Nazi agent, but he was subsequently released on the insistence of the Yugoslav government's inner clique, to whom he had delivered the information and who vouched for him. Still later Sekulich became the London correspondent of the Pittsburgh *Serbobran.*

6. The inner clique relayed the Gestapo information about the massacres by diplomatic pouch to Fotich in Washington and to its envoys elsewhere. It also submitted the story to the Bishop of Canterbury who reacted just as the clique (and Hitler) desired. Whether or not the Bishop consulted the British agents in charge of Yugoslavia, is not known. If he did, these old-time imperialist corruptionists—worrying about their personal interests in the Balkans as well as about the Empire's, and knowing that those interests depended on the triumph of the pan-Serbian scheme—almost certainly told him the information and the photographs were authentic. At any rate, the world heard that the Croatians were the worst breed of people under the sun, even worse than the Nazis. In every newspaper story about the massacres the emphasis was on the statement that they were the work of "*Croatians*" or of "*Croatian* Ustashi." Himmler and the Gestapo, in spite of having initiated and directed the pogroms, were never mentioned.

The picture was not quite as clear in midspring of '42 as it is in the above summary. It was clear enough, however, to take Stoyan Pribichevich and me to interested Washington officials. We pointed out that the pan-Serbians in the United States were playing the Axis game. To a representative of the State Department we pointed out that the Yugoslav legation was the headquarters of the anti-Croatian campaign.

All the officials to whom we talked knew it was true; some said so. But Washington could do nothing; it had no precedent, no policy for such matters. Fotich was the accredited minister of the Yugoslav government recognized by the United States, and since the Yugoslav legation was to be elevated to an embassy he was going to be ambassador.

Croatian, Slovenian and Serbian Americans wired the State Department and the White House protesting against Fotich's promotion. They maintained that accepting him as ambassador carried an implicit endorsement by the United States of the anti-Croatian campaign. But it was all in vain. Fotich was upped. In presenting his new credentials to the President, he uttered a few Yugoslav phrases; and as a sop to the anti-Fotich Yugoslav Americans, the President forebore to express his customary pleasure in accepting the credentials of a new envoy.

Meantime Foreign Minister Ninchich and King Peter II and his minister of court and three adjutants, all rabid anti-Croatians and pan-Serbians, came to the United States. A state dinner was given for them at the White House. There were receptions for the king at the Yugoslav legation, each costing thousands of dollars. Fotich presented him with a new Chrysler at a time when the average American citizen could not buy even a second-hand car for love or money. And the young king, parroting the instructions of his adjutants and minister of the court, chattered away about "My dear friend Drazha," whom he had never even seen but who at that very moment was collaborating with the Axis in an attempt to "exterminate" the Partisans.

In view of what was going on in Yugoslavia, the royal visit was an obscene performance on the part of official Yugoslavia, while the official American part in the show was, to put it mildly, regrettable. It was a propping up of the past; a cold-shouldering of the future that was trying to shape itself in Yugoslavia.

Ninchich and the king, under Fotich's sponsorship, went out of their way to endorse the anti-Croatian campaign. They allowed themselves to be photographed with the *Serbobran* crowd. In one of the pictures are bound volumes of the paper.

Foreign Minister Ninchich was too busy to talk with the Slovenian political exiles in New York who worried about the half-million Slovenians under Italy, but he spent three hours with his old friend Count Carlo Sforza.

Sforza . . .

In the fall of '41 I found myself at the same airport with him; we were going to an international conference in Havana. The aging count was at his suave and charming best. But I could scarcely bring myself to talk to him. I knew too much about his share in the events of 1917-'21.

Early in '41 Sforza had begun to lecture all over the United States. His subject was Italy, "the other Italy" which was not Mussolini's—his Italy; the "real," non-fascist Italy. And after he spoke in Cleveland or Chicago or Detroit I would get letters from Slovenian immigrants who were in America partly because of Sforza. They came from around Trieste and Gorizia, from along the river Socha, the region Italy had occupied in '18 under the London Pact and had retained after the Rapallo Conference. They had been driven from their native villages by the systematic terror which the Italian government—of which Sforza was then a leading member—instituted against the Slovenian and Croatian minorities.

Since '21 some sixty thousand Slovenians had left Italy for the United States; now they call themselves the "Sforza emigrants." Here is a letter from one of them:

"The other day several of us went to hear the count. After the lecture I felt almost physically ill. He may pose as an Italian patriot and the State Department in Washington may recognize him as such; actually he is an Italian imperialist pure and simple. . . . Let me tell you about my home village.

"Austria did us Slovenians no good; but at least she allowed us to be happy in our own way with what little we could eke out of our soil. . . . When I was young, around 1910 and later, there was a lot of singing in our village. In the evenings the young men gathered around the cistern under the old linden tree and sang and whooped; sometimes late into the night. And girls sang while working in the fields.

"Singing stopped when war broke out, or it was mixed with weeping when the men had to go off to fight for Austria. . . . Our hate for Austria grew; we began to talk of Yugoslavia, particularly after '17. . . . When the war ended, women whose men were coming home took their flour—if they had any—and baked, saying 'This is my first Yugoslav bread.' . . . There was singing in the village again. But not for long.

"Soon hungry-looking Italian soldiers in shabby, torn uniforms marched into our village. A whole battalion. In a few days they ate up everything we had; all our turnips, potatoes, grain and cabbage. . . . Why did they come? No one knew. We all thought they would go away again, and we would be a part of Yugoslavia. But no—they stayed. And no one in the village sang. . . .

"At first the Italian soldiers pretended to be our friends. Then they began to beat youngsters who wore little Yugoslav insignia.

There was a lot of brutality like that. But the people controlled themselves, tightening their fists, waiting for the day when the Italians would have to go. No one doubted that that day would come; there was a man named Woodrow Wilson in the world who was a friend of small nations. . . .

"Then one night a young man in our village, he was my cousin, took a notion to sing by the cistern. An Italian gendarme told him to shut up. The young man sang on. The gendarme hit him with his gun. There was a fight. In his rage, my cousin choked the Italian to death.

"My cousin escaped from the village, got to Trieste before morning and caught a ship. He is a good American citizen today, with three boys in the American army. . . .

"That was the beginning. Then we learned that we would have to stay under Italy. We lost our Slovenian priests and teachers; we had to hide our Slovenian books. The Italians made us buy pictures of the Italian king and put them up on our walls. One night they burned our house because my brother could not keep from looking angry when an Italian passed him. . . . People disappeared. Some were in jail; others we never heard of again. Lots of us went to America.

"Sforza was a minister in Rome then. Now twenty years later he has the nerve to talk to American audiences about 'the other Italy' the one *he* represents—"

As I say, the pan-Serbian propaganda was devilishly effective.

In Washington, I heard otherwise perfectly democratic people echo the Gestapo-initiated anti-Croatian and anti-Yugoslav "information." Among them were high officials, journalists, members of the foreign relations committees of the United States Senate and House of Representatives. I was told that "the Croatians are pro-Axis," that Machek "is little better than Pavelich," that Yugoslavia had folded up so quickly because Croatia had betrayed Serbia and that a future Yugoslavia "is impossible." I was asked some startling questions: Did I not agree that Serbia "is really the whole guts of the Balkans" and should be given the upper-hand? And why not restore the Hapsburgs and put them over a Catholic Danubian state? "As for your Slovenians, where would you rather see them—in Italy, where some of them are already perfectly happy [!] or in a Danubian state" And: "Do you know Count Sforza? A fine gentleman, isn't he?" . . .

Obviously most of these influential Washingtonians had fallen for

propaganda traceable to the Gestapo because they knew almost nothing of the Balkan and Central-European problem. When I started to answer their questions and explain why I disagreed, most of them were too busy to listen—they were concentrating only on winning the war. None seemed to know they were in danger of losing the peace after the military victory. A few eyed me suspiciously, taking my disagreement to mean that I was pro-Croatian and anti-Serbian and consequently, in their opinion, pro-Axis. Some of them inquired about me at the Yugoslav legation and heard that I was even worse —a Communist, a Russian agent and what-not.

Finally on September 3, '42, in a speech before an international student group in Washington, President Roosevelt referred to the resistance which the peoples of "Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece and *Serbia*" (my italics) were developing against the Axis occupation. A good many Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian Americans in different parts of the United States knew that some months before the President and Mrs. Roosevelt had asked me to the White House; now I began to receive wires and long-distance telephone calls. Why did the President say "Serbia" instead of "Yugoslavia"? Did it mean that he too had succumbed to pan-Serbian propaganda? Did it mean that the President himself, whom most Yugoslav Americans regarded as the greatest man in the world, had wiped Yugoslavia as a state from the postwar map? If so, how dare he? Or had some pro-Fotich official in the State Department or the White House changed "Yugoslavia" to "Serbia" in the President's speech? . . .

These questions were justified. I wondered what to do about them. The President was inhumanly busy with the military war; it was unfair to bother him with what he or his secretaries might consider a trifle. I telephoned a man in the Office of War Information who had as much insight into the "Yugoslav problem in the United States" as anyone in Washington. He had no idea why F.D.R. had said "Serbia" instead of "Yugoslavia," but agreed with me that the matter might have serious consequences within the United States, to say nothing of its affecting the anti-Axis guerrillas in Yugoslavia.

By then had come my first information about the Mikhailovich-Partisan rift which indirectly corroborated the Inter-Continent News stories in the *Daily Worker* that Mikhailovich and the Chetniks were "pro-Axis" and "traitors." This information suggested the probability that at the very time the President spoke and for a good while

before there had been no anti-Axis resistance in Serbia proper, but a great deal of it in Croatia and Slovenia.

I sent a long telegram to Mrs. Roosevelt explaining the situation and the deep disturbance of Yugoslav Americans. I requested the First Lady to decide whether the matter was sufficiently important to deserve the President's attention. She answered at once that she had given him my wire.

A few days later Mr. Roosevelt remarked at his regular press conference that he had made a "slip" in his September 3rd speech. He should have said "Yugoslavia" instead of "Serbia." The slip, he explained, was due to the fact that as a boy he had collected stamps of the old Kingdom of Serbia and the name "Serbia" had impressed itself on his mind.

Elmer Davis had serious difficulties with the *Serbobran* crowd. In mid-September '42 he called a number of Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian American leaders to Washington in an effort to put a stop to the Serbo-Croatian insanity in the United States. Assistant Secretary of State Berle spoke to them. All signed a pledge of cooperation with the United States government—all except Pekich and Kristoforovich of the *Serbobran* group. These two recalcitrants reported to the Yugoslav legation before and after the meeting with Davis and Berle. *Serbobran* went on its old way.

According to Blair Bolles in *Harpers*, the State Department scolded Fotich "for what it considered undiplomatic behaviour," but "in vain." Fotich turned the diplomatic tables on the State Department by protesting against the work of the *Serbobran* crowd. He said in effect that the American government should watch its citizens and keep them from interfering with the affairs of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia which he had the honor to represent.

Around that time, Frants Snoy, the Slovenian Clerical politician, came to see me. He told me he had just had an interview with the Polish premier, General Sikorski; a few days earlier he had seen Ambassador Fotich and the Papal nuncio in Washington. He came to warn me that I was making a mistake in coming out for the Partisans.

I said, "What do you mean?"

Snoy replied that the Partisans were bound to lose out. Everybody who was powerful in the Allied world was conservative and therefore anti-Partisan and anti-Communist. I shouldn't fool myself; there

would be no drastic change in Yugoslavia. The Anglo-American victory was going to be a conservative victory. British and American statesmen were gentlemen; they would not deal with what I called the "new leaders" in Yugoslavia.

"How about Russia?" I asked.

The Germans, said Snoy, were going to hold the Russians on the Eastern front while the British, American, French, Polish and perhaps Turkish armies would come up from the Mediterranean and from the Bosporus and the English Channel and take Europe against little more than a token resistance.

"Do you mean," I said, "that there is, or is going to be, a deal?"

No, no, Snoy hastened to say; nothing of the sort. The Germans might have proposed such a "deal"; but, if they had, the Anglo-American allies had rejected it. They were out for a complete victory. What he, Snoy, had in mind was organic in the whole situation. The responsible Germans knew they were defeated. They did not want the Russians to take over Germany and communize it. The Russians would be very hard on the Germans. The Anglo-American allies would treat them better—partly because the Germans, the "responsible" German leaders, would hold Russia for the Allies as well as for themselves.

Snoy repeated that this view of war developments was held by some pretty important people with whom he was in touch. He hinted very strongly that Sikorski was one of them. Obviously Snoy not only shared the view but hoped for such an outcome.

"Then," I said, "you're willing to accept the Nazis as your allies against Russia?"

"That's not the way to put it," returned Snoy. "This whole process, I emphasize, is organic in the situation. It is practically inevitable. There is no 'deal,' there will be no 'deal'; but you just watch and see how easy it will be for the Allied forces to get into Southern and maybe Western Europe. I'll wager they won't have very much difficulty in clearing Africa out. Everybody is going to be surprised. . . . Then, when the British and the Americans get to Italy and the Balkans and Central Europe, they will not use your Partisan 'leaders,' but people like Darlan, Mikhailovich, maybe Ciano; not Otto of Hapsburg, I suppose, but someone equivalent to him. . . ."

I said that might or might not happen. If anything like it came true, it would not mean a United Nations victory in the Balkans or anywhere, but merely an Anglo-Saxon-Vatican "victory," which I was sure would be no prelude to world peace.

The Chance

EARLY IN OCTOBER '42 I TOLD ONE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARIES of state that civil war in Yugoslavia seemed to me an extremely serious matter. I implied that Britain and the United States were behind Mikhailovich who was fighting the Partisans who, backed by Russia, were fighting the Axis; and that that looked to me pretty close to war between Britain and us on the one side and Russia on the other. Couldn't the United States government do something about it? The assistant secretary indicated he was not unaware of the situation, had in fact been losing sleep over it; but I gathered that the United States government had no working policy in reference to such problems. It left them to British hands—and at that time those British hands were the worst possible, smeared with Rumanian oil and itching for Yugoslav metal deposits. Although the American government planned to invade the Balkans, it had no intelligence service of its own in Yugoslavia. . . . Could it take the initiative, I asked, toward the formation of a commission of British, American and Russian army officers to go to Yugoslavia and assume command of the resistance? This would make Yugoslavia into a symbol of Allied unity rather than a scene of conflict between the allies. My suggestion, I learned, was full of difficulties—some perhaps insurmountable.

I decided to try to get some of the things I had learned into print and thus to the American people. Two magazine editors whom I saw reacted unfavorably. One said the Mikhailovich legend ought not to be disturbed; he himself had recently published a lovely piece about the hero. The other burst out, "What's the matter with those crazy Yugoslavs anyhow? Why are they always fighting among themselves? Balkanites! What reason was there for a Yugoslavia in the first place?"

I saw that the whole Mikhailovich hoax could not be revealed at once; it would have to be done piecemeal, gradually. I must not call it a hoax. So I wrote an article emphasizing the existence of the Partisans who had the support of Russia, mentioning the incompetence of the government-in-exile, and suggesting that Mikhailovich was also backed by the wrong kind of British agents. *The Saturday Evening Post* accepted it. Someone in Washington, I don't know who, tried to stop its publication, but in the end it was allowed.

Stoyan Pribichevich was back in London, this time for *Time, Life* and *Fortune*; and in mid-December '42, about the date my article appeared, *Time* published an item saying that Mikhailovich was not fighting the Axis; only the Partisans were fighting the Axis and they had become a power in Yugoslavia in spite of him, and had organized a tentative nuclear government of their own in the Liberated Territory.

This coincidental timing was fortunate. Buying a paper one morning in a hotel lobby in New York, I heard a delivery-man say to the fellow in charge of the newsstand, "Say, Jack, did you read about that guy Whatchyumicallovich? . . . I thought he was a hero like MacArthur; now look at 'im! The way they write now, there ain't nothin' to the guy. It's the other guys that are doin' all the fightin'."

In December '42 and later, talking with government officials, some of whom had no doubt about the hopeless incompatibility of the South-Slavic peoples whom Versailles and an undiscerning fate had lumped into a "synthetic state," I saw things something like this:

The Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian peoples were essentially no more "incompatible," no more dissimilar than, say, the English, Scotch and Welsh, or the various elements of the German and Italian populations. Compared to the United States, Yugoslavia was a homogeneous country. It was no more synthetic than Britain or Switzerland.

Yugoslavia came into existence at the demand of historic forces which had appeared more than a century before, and what happened in the new state in the twenty-odd years after the First World War was—on the violent side—equivalent to American history from 1775 to about 1875: revolution, civil war, assassination, carpetbagging *à la* the Chetniks', Know-Nothingism, graft, corrupt politics, capital-labor struggle, *etc.* There was a resemblance between the two countries otherwise too. And from that point of view the twenty-odd-year period in Yugoslavia must be defined as a groping,

dogged uphill struggle on the part of a dynamic country for a workable constitution, for a bill of rights, for union.

But there was this difference between Yugoslav and American history: the Yugoslav struggle for a civilization was endlessly complicated by the total European mess since 1918 and by direct and indirect foreign meddling and interference. First it was French and English "influence," then German and Italian pressure and aggression. No matter which, it was always corruptionist, always on the side of reaction, always promoting the worst type of "leader" whose actions, in turn, made for bad blood between Serbians and Croatians, and produced individuals who could be organized into Chetniks and Ustashi, now useful to Hitler in splitting up the country as part of his "technique of depopulation" so the Germans would fall heir to the Balkans even if the Nazis lost the war.

This was the gist of the Yugoslav tragedy.

But in general and in many essentials and particulars it was the tragedy of all Europe and possibly even the United States. In December '42 and later, the whole world seemed caught in a confluence of contradiction. Twelve months before, a phrase had been created by Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill: the United Nations. Now it was still largely a phrase, a fiction. And the world was tangled in the uncomfortable no-man's land between hope and reality, between what the "democracies" and "communism" said and how they acted, between what they pretended the relations among them were and what they were in fact. In Washington many people in high places were more anti-Russian than anti-German.

The contradictions in which we were caught were in the duality, in the schizophrenia of the United Nations, in their ostensible unity but actual disunity as an alliance and separately within each country. The Yugoslav civil war, which was revolution and counter-revolution, which was a rehearsal for World War III, was also a reflection of this essential split—a reflection, a result and a threat.

Julian Huxley said: "The most important fact today is not that we are in a war but in a revolution." The revolution of which he spoke went on everywhere, not only in Yugoslavia. What was happening in my native land was part of the whole. The big democracies, England and America, were torn by the revolution too (as yet without much internal bleeding): pro-Darlan, anti-Darlan; pro-Franco, anti-Franco; anti-Vatican, pro-Vatican; anti-Russia, pro-Russia; anti-Slav, anti-Negro; pro-future, pro-past; isolationist *versus* interna-

tionalist; pro and anti "a pint of milk a day"; pro-Jesse Jones, anti-Henry Wallace.

But all through '41-'42, Yugoslavia bled internally . . . and the significance of Yugoslavia's travail was this: She was the obvious, tangible microcosm, the accentuated miniature, of a possible and threatening world future. There may be internal bleeding elsewhere too before the war is over; it is even more likely when the peace is being made and when the enemy in Germany, Italy and Japan are no longer our direct worry. Yugoslavia came to her testing ground in the midst of war; in the problems of peace, all nations, big and small, will come to theirs.

The Yugoslav peoples were involved in a fearful process. It was integral with their amazing resistance against the Axis; also with the war as a whole. There had been in America many official and non-official expressions of admiration of Yugoslav resistance. Late in '42, however, there was much impatience, annoyance and cynicism about political developments in Yugoslavia. The political developments were nothing new; but they were only now being revealed. I was impatient with such impatience. It was due to big-nation superiority, to the lack of understanding of what was going on in Yugoslavia, and of the reasons behind it. And I was afraid the impatient cynicism was shared by too many of those in charge of preparation for the Balkan invasion.

It was my deep conviction that any military plans for Yugoslavia would have to go hand in hand with a successful approach to its political problem. Otherwise, the military plans would risk the probability that large elements of the Yugoslav peoples—elements now resisting the Axis with effective armed forces under the title of the Liberation Front or the Partisans—would not welcome the Anglo-American invasion as an agency of liberation, and might even oppose it. And that would be a dreadful happening—not only for Yugoslavia, but for the world. It might be one of the things that would cause the United States to underscore its isolationist tendency again.

The civil war in Yugoslavia was a manifestation of the basic difficulties between Britain and America (but specifically Britain at that period) on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other. And it was doubly distressing because I believed that Yugoslavia could be made—through wise and purposeful statesmanship—into a bridge between the Soviet and the West; and I was afraid that the chances for this might lessen right along.

If the forces colliding in Yugoslavia were not rearranged and re-

directed, was not World War III almost a certainty? If so, would the United States not be swept into it? On which side? Would it not possibly become a global civil war? . . . What was Russia's purpose in backing the Partisan forces and apparatus? One answer was simple: she welcomed the Yugoslav resistance; it helped her more than anything else so far; and naturally she wanted it to continue. But might there not be other reasons? Did Russia mean to force Britain and America to permit her an equal voice in postwar planning? I thought she should have such a voice.

The United States had no foreign policy; only some contradictory groping around. What was our underlying purpose? Had we one? If we were anti-Partisan, as we seemed to be, why? Were we aiming for the *status quo ante bellum*, or for the spread of democracy? The War Department, apparently on the authority of the President, dickered with Otto of Hapsburg. Were we more afraid of Communism or of an upsurge of Slavdom after the war than we were in favor of a fundamental reorganization of Europe? Were we as a country and a government afraid or unable (because of our internal political setup) to assume responsibility? Was that why we let the worst sort of British agents handle the Yugoslav problem? . . .

The Yugoslav problem was bewildering to the American mind. But it was complicated only in its superficial aspects. Basically, the situation had a simple pattern.

Two old and opposing motives were now coming to grips in Yugoslavia within the rigid chaos of occupation. One, exploiting and deepening that chaos, was out to destroy what unity the Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian peoples had attained in the face of all the drawbacks in the two decades between World War I and II; the other was welding that unity more firmly in spite of and through what had been happening, so that the future could be built upon it.

The first motive got its dynamic from Hitler and his *gauleiters* and quislings, from the native chauvinists in Croatia and Serbia, from the Greater-Serbian clique in the Yugoslav government in London, from the camarilla of adventurers and ambitious young army officers around the young king, and from some of the men in the Yugoslav diplomatic corps.

The second motive got its dynamic from the most active and politically healthiest element of the Yugoslav peoples.

This did not mean that everybody in the first group was pure villain, nor that there were no objectionable people and secondary motives in the second. But in the basic pattern of division, the Par-

tisans and Russia were with the second motive, while Mikhailovich, the British agents and the chauvinists belonged to the first.

The first group was without exception undemocratic, totalitarian, centralist and anti-federalist, while the majority in the second strongly favored federalism and democracy as the chief principles around which to reorganize Yugoslavia, the Balkans and eastern Europe after the war.

I knew that the Government of the United States was dissatisfied with the Yugoslav government-in-exile, but it continued to recognize it as the legitimate government of Yugoslavia, where scarcely anyone wanted it back. I recognized that by tradition the United States Government was deeply inhibited from doing anything officially toward reconstituting the government of another country, even though, as in this instance, a new government might be capable of formulating a policy acceptable—at least tentatively—to the second motive now operating in Yugoslavia, and even though that might be very useful to us in the war. I was aware of the complexity of traditions underlying this inhibition—*but* we were living in a world which was less tied to tradition, legalism or legitimacy than it was moving toward a great change, less tied to forms than it was moving toward the wider satisfaction of the people who make up nations.

The United States' military plans for invasion were not furthered by prohibiting short-wave broadcasters from mentioning a Balkan union or federation. The prohibition appeared to rest on the ground that the State Department had not yet decided whether a federation of the Yugoslav lands, Bulgaria, and possibly other countries, or some other union would be the best answer to the Balkan problem in line with the principles of the Atlantic Charter. . . . If this was the basis for the ban, did it not imply that the American government had at least tentative political plans for the Balkans? Did that not mean that we were in reality violating our tradition of non-interference in Europe while we appeared to invoke it? In other words, was it being invoked—as it had been invoked in the case of the Spanish Civil War—only to preclude or postpone, hoping to frustrate, interference by the progressive element in America with the government's plans for its own kind of interference? If it did not mean that, then why had the result of our negative non-interference been so consistently disastrous to peace and the furthering of democracy?

Nor was the cause of an Anglo-American invasion of the Balkans helped by BBC, controlled by official British censors, when it permitted the inner clique of the Yugoslav government-in-exile to broad-

cast to Yugoslavia—as it did all through '42—outright "Greater Serbia" propaganda. The British radio was daily urging Yugoslavs to join the army of Mikhailovich, King Peter's minister of war, although it was well known in London that the bulk of the Yugoslav people was anti-Mikhailovich partly because he was in a cabinet whose dominant members had no kinship to any kind of future that would interest them; and partly because he commanded the reactionary and crackpot Chetniks and was a stooge of foreign imperialism.

Moscow had demonstrated that it was for the Partisans and against Mikhailovich, against the inner clique of the government-in-exile. It had recognized Yugoslavia's right to Trieste. It strongly though implicitly supported a Yugoslav and/or a Balkan federation; perhaps a great East-European confederation. It opposed the British purposes in the Balkans which revolved around and apparently depended upon Mikhailovich, the Chetniks and the government-in-exile, both regarded by the Partisans and by Russia as captives of the British and extremely questionable.

The bulk of the Yugoslav peoples was pro-Russian (not pro-Communist, nor definitely anti-Communist). Contrary to the impatient and cynical, which was to say superficial publicists and government officials in America and in England, the peoples of Yugoslavia were politically mature: they knew what they wanted—also what they did not want. They were consciously fighting for life, against depopulation, for liberty, for a better world, striking in more than one direction because their life now and their liberty later were in danger from more than one. They wanted the sort of world that Sumner Welles and Henry Wallace talked about. They wanted that talk translated into action. Few had any faith in the British, who had let them down many times in the past, and who now backed Mikhailovich. They would fight the British just as fiercely as they were fighting the Axis today, if the British attempted to impose upon them another military or royal dictatorship. On that score there must be no doubt. And they would fight America too, if they became convinced that we supported the British and the military-political clique around the king; that we also wished to keep the Balkans dangling powerless in order to reserve the Mediterranean for Britain's route to India.

The political situation in Yugoslavia must, therefore, be taken actively and seriously into account in any plans for a military invasion of the Balkans.

Late in '42 and even later I was pessimistic about the situation. The gentlemen in the United States government were caught up in

routine. Each morning they came back to the same desks they had left the evening before, piled up with pretty much the same papers. Thus the past dragged along; the future had very little chance. Precedent and legitimism ruled. Protocol was the thing. Our war leaders hoped to save capitalism and Christianity in Europe. But to save that was not enough; to restore what had been, was not possible; and either might be worse than nothing. The need was to create something new—something that would go beyond the present forms of "democracy," capitalism, "Christianity," and "Communism" which we had today. To do that, our leadership would have to get away from their old desks; and move out into the living world—like Wendell Willkie, who in '42 loomed up as the only potential world statesman.

I did not blame the Roosevelt Administration; the President and the State Department were confronted by a huge intra-American question mark. Were the people of the United States going to want to participate in world responsibility or not? The President was worried about the reactionary Southern Democrats; about the "Catholic vote"; about the "fourth term." . . .

I was pessimistic. But I thought there was a chance that the United Nations might still unite, that forces bigger than the reactionary trends in Great Powers were at work and would overcome their Caesaristic schemes, which were essentially no better than Hitler's except in that they were less ambitious and more "polite."

Russia too was having her revolution, her own kind of revolution . . . and my feeling, my hope was that the inclusive upheaval in which the world was caught would be progressively resolved in compromise. That was as much as one could realistically hope for, and the basis for this hope was not any sort of firm faith in the wisdom and ability of Great-Power statesmanship, but in the probability that Russia and Britain and the United States as powers, as governments, were all becoming simultaneously too strong to risk World War III any time soon after World War II. Each would be up against gigantic immediate problems in which it would need the help of the other two. Each would be obliged to yield ground at various points, and that would bring them to a middle ground further ahead than where each now stood alone.

The question was how soon would this come about. Would it come in time? Which Allied power would make the first real move—America, Russia or Britain? As an American, I hoped it would be

the United States. But if that happened, it would be only in consequence of a lot of prodding.

Much of our "leadership" in Washington was paralyzed by fear or position or both. It was too formal for a revolutionary period. Running a global war, it was still pretty isolationist at many points. It had stuck at the same desks too long, worrying about the same old "national interests." Could it be prodded away from its day-to-day routine "realism" into the bigger realism which included responsibility commensurate with our American power? Could that be done any other way than through the American people? Most likely not.

The American people were almost unconscious concerning world politics. But they were waking up. They responded wonderfully to Wendell Willkie, to Henry Wallace—men who were not merely clever or politic, not formally correct and diplomatically deft, but really sincere. The majority of the American people would assume their share of world responsibility if they were told the truth and convinced of the necessity.

In Washington on December 17, '42 I had the opportunity to say these things to about a score of journalists and radio commentators whose readers and listeners totaled fifty to sixty million. Then they asked me questions. A few were hostile questions. But I had a chance to answer them; to remark that the Partisans in Slovenia and eastern Balkans were helping our American army in Africa; to back up my generalizations with such facts as I knew from Yugoslav history and the current situation in Yugoslavia, in the government-in-exile, in Anglo-American relations. We had a long pow-wow.

At the moment I knew that the Washington correspondents could not go much farther than I had gone in the *Satevepost,* but I asked them to remember for later use that less than three weeks before—in the last days of November '42, in the little Bosnian city of Bikhach—the fighting people of Yugoslavia, trying to get hold of their future, had created a new and representative Yugoslav government; and that the news of it had come *via* Moscow.

For several days the press and radio in the United States were full of the Partisan-Mikhailovich rift and the problem of political unity in the United Nations. Mikhailovich was referred to respectfully, for the State Department and the Foreign Office still were behind him, but the Partisans were at last recognized as a fighting factor on the side of the United Nations.

At about the same time, a hint of the Yugoslav situation got into

the London *Times*. And in January and February '43 a number of good if highly cautious articles about it appeared in British weeklies and dailies.

Thus—more than a year late, in this era of swift communication—the peoples of the United States and Britain learned of the Yugoslav Liberation Army made up of diverse political, national and religious elements—Communists and non-Communists; Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians, intermingled with freedom-loving Germans, Albanians, Greeks and Italians; Catholics, Jews, Orthodox and Moslems—and fighting in unity, groping toward new formulae for civilization.

The "Government" In London

EVERY FEW WEEKS DURING THE FIRST EIGHT MONTHS OF '43 I received a letter from a man I had met briefly in Yugoslavia eleven years ago who was now an official in the Yugoslav government-in-exile in London. Hearing I was writing this book, he volunteered to keep me informed on what was going on there. He begged me not to reply. Apparently his letters did not go through British and American censorship. What means of transmission he used, I don't know. The envelopes which were addressed in his handwriting reached me postmarked New York.

The accumulated letters—now, in August '43—total fifty-odd pages. Most of the information is too detailed to repeat here; all of it is sordid in a futile kind of way, documenting the utter incapacity of the "government" and almost all the individual ministers.

Some excerpts:

"*February 17th:* . . . The crisis continues; there is no prospect of its resolution. Most of the ministers, including Premier Yovanovich, are trying strenuously to ignore the Partisans at home. . . . Sometimes more than a month passes without a cabinet meeting. The ministers avoid each other. When they do get together, they debate interminably about what happened in 1917-'19 or '27-'29 and why, and who was to blame for it. They deliver speeches two, three hours long. . . . The British are disgusted with us; so I think is the American ambassador, Biddle. But the British are also to blame. They, I believe more than we, are responsible for Mikhailovich; but now we, I mean the inner group of ministers and the king's adjutants, want desperately to hold onto him. He's 'all we have'; and we haven't got him; and he is less and worse than nothing. . . .

"*March 11th:* . . . Milan Grol's serbiyanski Democrats have bungled things terribly, and the British, the Eden people, are disgusted with him. They wanted him as foreign minister after Ninchich was

forced out; so did Biddle who spent much time and effort on him; but Grol was afraid to take the responsibility. Afraid of what? God knows. I suppose his own shadow. Everybody is afraid of everything. . . . So the foreign ministry went to Premier Yovanovich, which is the same as if Ninchich had remained. Now poor old Grol writes memoranda to poor old Yovanovich (they seldom meet), demanding a definite statement of policy, which Yovanovich ignores. He ignores everything. He tries to turn everything into a joke or an excuse to tell a long-winded story.

"*March 23rd:* . . . The crisis continues. *Bozhé moi*! [My God!] . . . Grol threatens a showdown. He says the Democrats will quit unless Yovanovich does so and so. But they won't; they are afraid of such a step, afraid of the consequences. . . . I don't know if you intend to write about this sort of thing or not; if you do, perhaps you should not attack Grol or the Democrats generally. They are good people. I understand you Americans have a phrase: 'Good for what?' Well, for nothing perhaps; but they are the best we have. They are neurotics with right ideas and without will and faith: ghosts from 1918-'41. They seem unable either to take over the government or to quit it. Of course the same goes for us underlings, except that perhaps some of us are a little more objective. . . . Now and then I feel thoroughly sick of myself. Please don't ever reveal my identity. I am writing you these letters partly to feel that I may be doing something. There are three or four other Yugoslav emigrés in London who feel very much as I do. We get together and talk, but less and less often. We really can't stand each other either. If only one could get drunk; but it is difficult to get enough whisky in England, and it is terribly expensive. Some of us are saving our money, although we don't admit that we mean to stay in England or go to America after the war. Some of us think that because we have served the government-in-exile we may not be allowed to go home. Only the downright scoundrels are really having a good time. . . . Now and then I say to myself, 'I am living in the middle of a *fin de siècle*.' . . .

"*March 25th:* I sent you a letter day before yesterday; today I have an opportunity to send you another. . . . I assume you know that Banus Subashich is here in London. He sees hardly anyone; mostly the Croatians in the government and the king and the queen-mother. He goes to the theatre with the king. He and the Croatian ministers want to keep the Sporazum. They don't trust the Serbian politicians; not even Grol or Bozha Markovich. . . . And Pera Zhivkovich and Kon-

stantin Fotich are here too, and Dyonovich (from Cairo). They came in connection with the continuing crisis. The British have been putting pressure on Yovanovich, who is mobilizing his pan-Serbian forces. His project, on which he has worked assiduously since last January and for which he has the support of the 'war cabinet' and the diplomats (especially Fotich, I hear) and allegedly of Washington (is that possible?) . . . his project is that he will go to the king at the proper moment and tell him the political parties cannot agree, and that a non-political 'council of experts' is the only solution. Needless to say, Yovanovich would head it and the other 'experts' would include (so the speculation goes) Gavrilovich, Fotich, Dyonovich, Zhivkovich and Milanovich (pan-Serbian chargé d'affaires of our embassy in London). Mikha Krek would 'consent' to enter such a cabinet, or Frants Snoy who I understand is coming from America, and a Croatian renegade or two could be found. . . . The Democrats, the fools, don't take the possibility of such a development seriously. I think only the British can prevent it; and Eden's people are not properly informed; they don't really understand things in Yugoslavia and don't know that that won't work. In fact I suspect they may favor it. They are violently sick of the whole 'Yugoslav situation.' But it serves them right, although the Eden group cannot actually be held responsible for the work of the British liaison officers who were until recently in sole charge of 'Mikhailovich,' meaning not so much the man as the whole fraud under his name. But the good people in the foreign office and military intelligence are responsible in so far as they have let things drift. The British often want to do the right thing, but are usually late in bestirring themselves. *Bozhé moi,* what bunglers! And now they look down on us! . . . But something is in the works, I think.

"*April 2nd:* . . . The British have made a turnabout in re: Mikhailovich . . . and their ambassador in Moscow is negotiating directly with the Soviet on the Yugoslav situation. Yovanovich has accepted the British as negotiators, which means the Yugoslav government has renounced its sovereignty. So far no results have come forth, except that the BBC, the Ministry of Information, the Foreign Office and the War Office have entirely new people working on Yugoslavia and the Balkans, and their attitude toward the Partisans and Mikhailovich is markedly different from the old crowd's, which dated from the Neville Chamberlain and Stanley Baldwin eras. This is in line with the general change in British attitude toward Russia, which began at least by January, at any rate after Stalingrad and the big Soviet

counter-offensive. That showed the British—Churchill and Eden (Eden first of all, I hear)—that Russia was as strong as or stronger than Germany, that she would play a big part throughout the war and in the peacemaking as well, and that *ergo* an all-around sincere and straightforward rapprochement was in order. Eden's trip to the United States to convince Washington of the imperative necessity of such a rapprochement was a milestone in this new British policy. The Soviet people in London are grimly amused by all this. . . . If the Russians now insist that Mikhailovich be sacrificed, the British will sacrifice him regardless of his alleged legendary value, and there is nothing Yovanovich, Gavrilovich and the 'war cabinet' can do about it. The probability is the British won't drop him entirely because they seldom do that, and perhaps the Russians will not insist on it; they are very tolerant of Anglo-Saxon (including American) eccentricities. . . . The chief British liaison officer now, or until recently, in Yugoslavia is said to be a rather good man: Colonel Bailey, who was in New York last year; possibly you know him. Certainly he is an immense improvement on the old crew which was in charge of Yugoslavia up to last December or January.

"*April 13th:* These damned fools in the government-in-exile! Now we are an all out-and-out puppet of the British and we can't blame the British for it. . . . We have an excellent man here, Colonel Bozhin Simich, a Serbiyanats. He was implicated in the Salonika Case in 1917, but Pashich and Alexander did not get hold of him because he was with his Yugoslav regiment in Russia. He stayed there for several years after the war, was a friend of Lenin's but not a Communist. . . . Finally he settled in France. After her collapse, he came to London and, somehow, when Simovich was premier he took him on. He was made minister to the Free French and kept that position after Simovich was pushed out of the premiership. He is a wonderful, wise old man, neither radical nor anti-radical; a real Serbian, the sort of man any Yugoslav can call brother . . . and as long ago as last October and November he urged the government to send King Peter on a visit to Russia as a gesture to the Stalingrad defenders and a prelude to some sort of agreement. But Yovanovich, Ninchich (he was still foreign minister then, you remember) and Gavrilovich, all so violently anti-Communist that for all practical purposes they are anti-Russian, rejected the idea. They held it would be a concession to the Partisans and would encourage Communism and weaken Mikhailovich. Somebody started the rumor that Colonel Simich is a Soviet agent; he isn't; he is nobody's agent; just an honest man. Yovanovich's crowd

thought of displacing him as minister to de Gaulle, but didn't dare—they don't dare do anything. I don't think they are evil people, most of them anyhow; they are just afraid; they stagger in bottomless stupidity. . . . So do some of the other regimes here. . . . Any one of the three or four dozen people who work in the Yugoslav government office building (most of them have nothing to do) would make a better prime minister than Yovanovich. He goes on his academic prestige, and the Serbdom he represents is the Serbdom of the dead or dying past. This also applies to the other 'important' serbiyanski ministers and ex-ministers (the woods are full of them). It takes them months to see something that is right in front of them. Even up to February ['43] Yovanovich and the 'war cabinet' wanted to call the Partisans 'bandits' and 'Gestapo agents' in a broadcast to Yugoslavia—at the very time the Axis was conducting an offensive against them. Yovanovich's speech was all written (copy enclosed), but the British censor canceled it. . . . Now of course they sing a different tune. Yovanovich and Fotich discussed the Partisan-Mikhailovich 'rift' as a quarrel between the Russians and the Anglo-Americans. They agreed that the Yugoslav government is not responsible for it and can't do anything about it. The British recently got King Peter to appeal to 'all the guerrillas' for unity against the enemy; but in an interview at the same time, he admitted that a Partisan-Mikhailovich unification under one command is not possible. . . . Yovanovich and the people closest to him were among the last to realize that the British policy was changing. Now the premier is dropping hints that maybe Mikhailovich did 'fall into an Italian trap.' This in the face of the fact that most of us, and the interested British-American circles here too, have known at least since July '42 that Mikhailovich had an agreement with the Italian commanders against the Partisans. We've all understood that the idea was to create a Greater Serbia alongside a Greater Italy after the war at the expense of the Slovenians and Croatians.

"*April 24th:* . . . A week or ten days ago, just before he left for the United States, Winston Churchill sent Slobodan Yovanovich a sizzling letter. This comes from the most reliable British and Russian sources in London, sources which have never yet been wrong. Several of us underlings know about it . . . and we know too that Yovanovich has not shown it to any other ministers. It may be even that none knows about its existence. The old man simply stuck the letter in his pocket. I haven't seen it of course, but I have been told what it contains. In the best imperial manner, employing his famous strong phrases which roll like tanks to attack, Mr. Churchill up-

braids the Yugoslav government-in-exile for Mikhailovich's misbehavior, meaning among other things his collaboration with the Axis and his recent insulting remarks to a British liaison officer in Yugoslavia. The British prime minister demands that the government of Yugoslavia reconstitute itself at once so that it can play its role in the events in Southern Europe which are coming up pretty soon now. . . . God knows how long Yovanovich will keep the letter to himself; but it is entirely possible that half the world will know about it before he calls a cabinet meeting. But I suppose he cannot postpone another *kriza* beyond Churchill's return from Washington. . . .

"*May 19th:* . . . The *kriza* has been pushing toward some sort of climax for two weeks now. I hear the British favor a 'military government' which might even include General Simovich; which suggests how desperate the situation is. If this is so, the British are stupid. They don't realize that the Partisans are more opposed to the refugee Serbian generals (except perhaps men like Bora Mirkovich) than to the non-military politicians who fled—'deserted'—the country. But, however, the Yugoslav government is reconstituted, the British at least have enough sense not to want Fotich in it; their embassy in Washington has no use for him. In many ways, the British are ahead of your State Department.

"*June 29th:* As you will have learned from the press long before receiving this letter, the *kriza* has been 'resolved' and we have a new cabinet headed by Misha Trifunovich. Of the thirteen members, eight are Serbians from Serbia, one is a Serbian from Bosnia; two are Croatians and two Slovenians. . . . The British had hoped that Banyanin would be the new premier, but since he is a 'Yugoslav nationalist' the pan-Serbians did not want to take a chance on him. He failed to form a government. So we have dear old Misha, who can deliver a three-hour speech in the most wonderful Serbian without saying a thing. And Drazha Mikhailovich is still 'minister of war,' although both the British and Biddle (to say nothing of the Russians) wanted him dropped from the cabinet. Besides no one knows where he is; not even the British liaison officers; in fact there is a rumor that he is dead. But now Drazha has a new 'deputy' or 'acting' minister of war in the person of General Pera Zhivkovich, who of course is violently anti-Partisan; he is worried about his real-estate in Belgrade, like Ninchich and the other old-time politicians of that type. The Three Majors—the king's adjutants who used to run the government—are with us no more. The British demanded some time ago that Yovan-

ovich get rid of them, and they are now in Scotland training for parachutists. And Major Knezevich's brother Radoyé is no longer minister of the court. King Peter now has a British adjutant who simply turned up and 'reported' to him. . . . Old man Slobodan is vice-premier, so are Krek and Kernyevich; Grol is foreign minister. . . . Budisavlyevich would not join the new government. It is no better than the previous one; in some ways it is worse. Pera Zhivkovich 'acting' minister of war! The Partisans must like that. . . . Let me repeat: No one in London at this time has the slightest notion of where Mikhailovich is. The 'statements' by him which the government has been handing out are all false, written right here in London, in fact, in a room on the floor just below me. These 'statements by Mikhailovich' are not appearing in the general British press, whose editors are more or less informed; but the American press gobbles them up. . . . This does not mean that the whole Chetnik-reactionary business in Yugoslavia under his name is done with. Even if he is dead, 'Mikhailovich' may be a considerable factor when invasion comes—and after. But all the Chetnik leaders together certainly do not command a quarter of a million effectively armed men. That is probably the number of Partisans who are going to help in the invasion—unless the Anglo-American generals and their diplomatic advisors snub them and work only with Mikhailovich. As of now, so far as I can see, this is unlikely, at least on the part of the British. I am not sure about the Americans. England is terribly puzzled by the conservatism and 'unrealistic realism' of your State Department, which apparently means also President Roosevelt. . . .

"*July 1st:* . . . The Trifunovich government is not only no better than the Yovanovich one, it is worse at least in that it is more actively torn by contradictions. In his Vidov-dan [June 28, '43] address short-waved to Yugoslavia, King Peter, following a strong 'suggestion' from the British, voiced his admiration and love 'for *all* those national fighters, under whatever temporary label they may be fighting, who have so successfully thrown back a new German offensive' against the liberated parts of Yugoslavia. This, thought some of us, might be the beginning of Yugoslav statesmanship; but no—the very next day Acting Minister of War Pera Zhivkovich issued an order directing '*all* the guerrillas' to rally immediately to the command of 'the unexampled son of our people, General Drazha Mikhailovich.' At the same time, the Yugoslav minister to Soviet Russia, Stanoyé Simich, who has long differed with the government-in-exile, is officially broadcasting from Moscow to Yugoslavia glorifying the Partisans. He is

no relation to Colonel Simich, who has resigned as minister to de Gaulle; the Colonel does not wish to be connected with a government that includes Pera Zhivkovich. . . . Nothing is settled; the *kriza* goes on. Cabinet meetings are held more frequently than formerly, but are often violent and invariably stupid. . . . Hours are spent debating whether or not King Peter should marry or get engaged to the Greek princess, Alexandra. I am sorry for the boy; he is not a bad sort personally. At twenty, however, his mental age is about sixteen. He can't help that; but it is a serious limitation in view of his position. Everyone knows—he says himself—that he has no real interest in anything except radio and automobile mechanics, the cinema and Hollywood, Bob Hope and 'the girl I love,' who is a few years older than he. . . . But young Peter is on to things enough to know that he is the center of the government; that without him it cannot go on; that in a sense the ministers, many of them more than three times his age, are at his mercy. He loves to annoy them; keeps telling them they will never get back to Yugoslavia. . . . Another thing. You probably know that the king gets £8,500 [$34,000] *a month* from the Yugoslav treasury while his mother and brothers receive £40,000 [$160,000] a year. This is clear income; they pay no taxes at all. It seems that our royal family is financially the most fortunate of all the families living in Great Britain today. Yet neither the king nor the queen-mother has given twopence for the Yugoslav prisoners-of-war fund, to which I understand the American people have been asked [by the American Friends of Yugoslavia] to contribute two million dollars [through Community Chests]. The men in Axis prisoner-of-war camps should be helped as much as possible; they are starving and ill; but it is a crying shame that not only the king but scarcely anyone in the government-in-exile has given any sort of substantial sum to that fund.

"*July 13:* I must tell you about the 'draft of policy' which ex-premier Yovanovich began to write months ago. Premier Trifunovich has lately been revising and trying to finish it, for Britain and America are waiting impatiently for it: which suggests that the invasion of Yugoslavia and the Balkans may be near. As it stands, the proposed 'policy' isn't bad. For one thing it recognizes the existence of the distinctive Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian nationalities, and calls for basic reconsideration of various Yugoslav institutions as they existed before the war. One sentence reads: 'The period of unitarianism is a thing of the past and the future belongs to a federal organization which would enable the [South-Slavs] to collaborate harmoniously

without denying their national individualities.' Another passage states the Yugoslav war aim is to be the 'restoration of a Yugoslavia greater and mightier than before, and her reorganization in the spirit of democracy.' . . . Last Saturday, however, the cabinet had a tense meeting about the 'policy draft.' The Croatian vice-premier, Yurai Kernyevich, proposed three important amendments—(*1*) a reaffirmation of the Croatian home-rule Sporazum; (*2*) an agreement that each of the three nations, instead of the people of Yugoslavia as a whole, will decide by a majority on what kind of Yugoslavia they want to be part of; and (*3*) the condemnation of those inside and outside the country who worked or work against the restoration of a unified Yugoslav state and who thus widen the gulf among its nationalities. These Croatian amendments caused the fur to fly. The Serbians contended that federation would take care of everything, that the people as a whole were to determine the future political organization of Yugoslavia and that the Croatian Sporazum entered into with Prince Paul had been irregular if not illegal, not to say oblivious of the ethnic situation in the territory it covered. Of course they opposed the condemnation proposal, for it covers most of the Serbians now in the government and nearly all the diplomats. . . . The amendments were voted down by the reactionary majority. The meeting was part of the old struggle for 'our ideal,' for postwar borders between Serbia and Croatia. . . . For the life of me I can't see how these people, or any other combination of Yugoslav emigrés, can possibly 'resolve' the *kriza*. Hardly anyone trusts anybody else, and with reason. Their memory of the past is stronger than their faith in the future. . . . The June '43 *Fortune* containing Stoyan Pribichevich's article on the Yugoslav 'rift' has just reached London. His comparison of the Yugoslav government in London to the souls in Dante's Inferno who are forced to step ahead while their faces are turned back is regrettably apt. . . . I forgot to mention that the king attended one of the first meetings of the Trifunovich government. Presumably it had to do with Alexandra. It seems the boy is really quite in love, and there were some difficult moments during the discussion on this burning problem of state. Twice the king broke into tears. He threatened to abdicate. . . . Since then the government has yielded to him; he can become engaged. . . . *Bozhé moi milli!*—"

My own emotions about the South-Slavic peoples in their travail during 1941-'43 are considerably stronger than anything I feel for King Peter II, but I am sorry for him too. I think he should keep his millions, marry Princess Alexandra or any other girl any time he

wishes, get off the Yugoslav state budget with the rest of the family, go to Hollywood, and tinker with radios and cars. Not only for his sake but for the sake of the South-Slavic and Balkan peoples.

Now, in the summer of '43, I say the sooner King Peter II abdicates the better. Except for Peter I, the monarchy has been a mixed blessing both for Serbia and Yugoslavia. The majority of the Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian peoples have never had much use for it. Many of them were republicans decades ago. If the monarchy is not abolished, it will produce sheer evil after the war. This goes for other Balkan countries as well. If not abolished, the Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek, Albanian and Rumanian dynasties will be the core of the sovereignty nonsense and undemocratic hokum, the screen for continued corruptionism, and a serious obstacle to any future Yugoslav or Balkan federation—which is possible only on a republican basis.

As for the Yugoslav "government," when the Trifunovich cabinet was formed at the end of June '43, those in the United States paying close attention to Yugoslav matters commented, "It couldn't possibly be worse"; it included two ex-dictators: Pera Zhivkovich and Bogulyub Yevtich. Yet on August 10th the impossible occurred. The Trifunovich group resigned following its failure to reach an agreement on postwar policy, notably on the Croatian Sporazum; now, as this book goes to press, there is a "non-political government of experts," really bureaucrats and militarists, under the dictatorship of the adolescent King Peter.

Bozhidar Purich is premier and foreign minister. Twenty-odd years ago he was the Yugoslav consul general in Chicago. For a time some of the society columnists referred to him as Count Bozhidar de Purich and speculated on which heiress would get him. Later he became son-in-law of the late "Radical" leader Nikola Pashich. In the '30s he was the Yugoslav minister in Paris; then he was accredited to Vichy. He is reactionary, clever, cynical, opportunistic; and a friend of some important Britons.

Drazha Mikhailovich continues as "minister of war," but his work in exile will be done by General Pera Zhivkovich, who is "assistant commander-in-chief"—the commander-in-chief being the young king.

Vladimir Milichevich, a former Belgrade police inspector who specialized in "politicals" and was a superior of the terrorists in charge of the Glavnyacha, is minister of the interior (and the police).

A youngish Slovenian Clerical, Ivan Kern, a naval officer who prevented his ship from falling into Axis hands, is minister of com-

munications, mines and forests. He is pro-British, anti-Russian, a personal friend of Snoy and Krek.

The finance portfolio was given to a Croatian, Milan Martinovich, the former head bookkeeper in the ministry.

The other members of the government as it stands in mid-August '43 are not worth mentioning.

None of these people represents anyone in the country. All are mere career people. They are responsible only to young Peter.

The appointment of Pera Zhivkovich as "assistant commander-in-chief" indicates that the purpose of the "government"—perhaps also of the British (and of the American State Department?)—is to establish a military dictatorship in Yugoslavia, most likely under Mikhailovich if he is still alive, or will be when Yugoslavia is liberated from the Axis. I believe this cannot be done. Nor under Zhivkovich or quisling Nedich, which is another plan.

Strange things are going on. Early in August '43, in a radio interview broadcast from Washington, Ambassador Konstantin Fotich—once the foremost anti-Partisan in America, but ever an opportunist—declared that Mikhailovich and his forces were now only of historic importance; currently the actual fighting against the Axis was being waged by guerrillas who call themselves Partisans. And at 12:30 p.m. on July 21st the New York station WOR (and presumably the entire Mutual Network) broadcast on instructions from the Office of War Information: "General Mikhailovich today denounced the Chetniks as quislings and traitors." There was no further explanation and no references appeared in the newspapers.

I hope that before the invasion of the Balkans begins, or at the very latest right after, Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union will have dropped the Yugoslav "government," including "Mikhailovich"; and will have openly established *joint* diplomatic relations with the National Liberation Front organizations governing the Liberated Territories in Yugoslavia, and *joint* liaison with the people's army commanded by Tito and other peoples' guerrilla chiefs.

The Raft: Communists and Non-Communists Together

In an earlier chapter (p. 181) I suggested that the Liberation Front with its Partisan army in Yugoslavia, made up of Communists and many shades of non-Communists, was analogous to a crudely, hastily constructed raft. It was built of logs, planks and debris that floated about in the rising flood-waters of the people's resistance. It never pretended to be a *Normandie* or a seagoing yacht; nothing as finished and slick, delicate and vulnerable as that. It was in its own way an extremely tough, efficient and tenacious craft.

As we have seen, the Axis and Mikhailovich, assisted in varying degrees by the Yugoslav government in London and the pre-Eden British agents, tried their best to wreck it. Uninformed or reactionary Americans in and out of the State Department helped by suppressing or ignoring the facts of its existence for over a year. But the flood-waters finally carried the raft over the retaining-walls of censorship, first weakened by Moscow, the Inter-Continent News, and the Leftist press in England and America.

Then official Britain, noticing the Red glow over the miracle of Stalingrad, experienced enlightenment, which will be forever to her credit—if it does not dim out in the near future. In the summer of '43 it still burned brightly. *The New York Times* of July 22nd contained a dispatch from Cairo by its correspondent C. L. Sulzberger, reporting that "the British government has established military liaison with the Yugoslav Partisan movement led by the chieftain who bears the *nom de guerre* Tito." Mr. Sulzberger quoted an official statement of the General Allied Headquarters for the Middle East recognizing some recent Partisan successes against the Axis which were "welcomed here as proof that the German claim to have wiped out the main body of the Partisan army is false. It is known that the three

Partisan divisions which were engaged against more than double their number in Montenegro have now largely escaped to carry on their increasing war against Axis communications. At a time when the Axis must switch troops to Italy, this military success is considered to be of particular value to the Allied cause."

This official statement respectfully referred to Mikhailovich as a factor in Yugoslav guerrilla warfare. After all, the big Allied powers still recognized the Yugoslav government in London of which he was a member. But the statement continued:

"Some indication of the success of Yugoslav resistance is shown by the well-substantiated claim that the Partisans of Croatia have attacked and destroyed about two hundred and fifty Axis trains passing over Croatian railways since the spring of '42."

This is a good even if terribly late—and up to this writing not quite convincing—beginning in the right direction. The General Allied Headquarters in Cairo includes high-ranking American officers; but the good beginning is largely on British initiative. I don't know where the State Department stands on Yugoslavia in August '43; it seems impossible to find out; but I have reason to believe that some of the American military men, who during '43 have quickly acquired considerable perception about the complex Yugoslav problem, are also tending in the right direction.

The process of compromise within the big United Nations has finally begun. Early in '42 Wendell Willkie, as he tells in *One World*, was oppressed by the narrow, conservative outlook of the British officers he met in the Middle East; yet now—possibly as early as April or May '43—British officers took steps to establish liaison with Tito, the Yugoslav commander who happens to be a Croatian and the foremost Communist in the Balkans.

The steps, to repeat, are not quite convincing, for I happen to know that at the same time—in July-September '43—the "Anglo-Americans" have been in contact with quisling Nedich, a potential Serbian Darlan. As I write, a deal between him and the Allied command in Cairo is being worked out. If it is put into effect, it will be unfortunate. But I think the long-run chances are against it. It will only mess up the Allies.

Nothing succeeds like success . . . and, as the General Allied Headquarters for the Middle East admitted, the Partisan successes during '42-'43 were of particular value to Allied strategy. But even in '43, up to August, these successes were skimpily reported in the

large American papers, news-magazines and journals of opinion, although information about them was available in New York—at the ICN office, a source no redder than the communiqués of the Red Army, which were published. Usually, United Press dispatches and the *New York Times* special correspondents still mistakenly credited them to "Mikhailovich" or "the Chetniks." Thanks to Stoyan Pribichevich's continuous information from London, *Time* and *Fortune* magazines were the only exceptions among the big non-Leftist publications in this silence about the Partisans.

The Partisans, as I have said, were badly mangled by the Nazi offensive between mid-January and early March. By the middle of March, however, large bodies of them were back in the fight.

Around May 15th the Italo-German-Ustashi forces in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia launched a series of attacks on the Partisan guerrilla positions and the "islands" of the Liberated Territory. The attacks were so coordinated that they amounted to another general offensive, and for six weeks fierce battles big and small were fought on dozens of "fronts." The Partisans suffered great losses but not as many as the Axis claimed. For instance, the German Information Bureau announced that the Liberation army's casualties in the Montenegro-Herzegovina-Sandjak fighting exceeded twelve thousand; but a few days later the Free Yugoslavia radio commented: "On the basis of available data it has been established that in the forty days of fighting in those territories the patriot units lost a total of two thousand killed and wounded." A slightly earlier German claim that "thirteen thousand Croatians were killed in putting down a Communist revolution in Southern Croatia which has been going on for weeks" was perhaps no less exaggerated.

In these spring attacks, whose aim was the destruction of the Partisan army, the Axis commanders used eight full divisions. They were incalculably better equipped than the Partisans who in most places were outnumbered three and even four to one. In the Herzegovina, Montenegro and Sandjak regions, "over one hundred Axis planes dropped several million kilograms of bombs" on Partisan positions and liberated towns. The enemy tried a new tactic called "triple encirclement." It didn't work. "Our heroic fighters," said Free Yugoslavia on June 26th, "punctured all three rings." And in the process they expanded the Liberated Territory, capturing numerous Axis pill-boxes, bunkers, and larger fortifications peppering the Balkans.

By the end of June the victory was clearly the Yugoslavs'—and Axis sources admitted it. Three German divisions lost around fifty percent in killed and wounded. The correspondent of the *Corriere della Sera* complained that the Partisans practiced and demanded of their enemy a "very crude warfare," in which "all the traditional ideas of the rear, encirclement, offensive and victory are confused. For example, recently an Italian division attacked the guerrillas, scattered them and then launched a pursuit. Nevertheless, later when the Italian command, assuming that the action had been completed, ordered the division to return to its base, it turned out that the division had been encircled by the Partisans . . . who had rapidly reorganized in the division's rear. The Italians again had to enter battle. . . . Every position captured must be converted into a fortress, for at any moment it may be isolated, cut off from the other areas and besieged."

The Axis-Nedich-controlled newspaper in Belgrade, *Novo Vremé*, admitted the heavy casualties sustained by the occupation forces: "For two years uncompromising struggle has been in progress in Serbia. One after another the supporters of collaboration with the occupation troops—the Ustashi soldiers and officers—perish. This hard, severe war has been forced upon us by the guerrillas."

The Partisans, wrote journalist Gorresio in *Corriere della Sera*, "lay mines on roads and railways, make barricades with great tree trunks, or obstructions by other means, and await in ambush the passing convoys and columns. . . . They have no fixed headquarters, encampments, concentrations or bases; they wander about in the woods and mountains, in accordance with the usual laws of brigandage." And a Ustashi writer in *Hervatski Narod* said that "in this hard and severe fighting . . . the Partisan bandits try to mislead the German soldiers in their own language. One can hear them shout, 'Don't shoot, we're Ustashi!'"

According to Gorresio, the Partisans have an excellent supply system. "In unknown caves and dugouts are stores of supplies . . . clothes, footgear . . . ammunition reserves guarded by special guerrillas who appear to carry on peacefully with their work as charcoal burners."

Tito was the supreme leader of this warfare. On July 19th the Nazis announced a reward of one hundred thousand Reichmarks for him dead or alive.

On July 2nd the Free Yugoslavia radio reported that Axis troops had been driven from all of rural Bosnia, that incidental to clearing

out this vast territory the Partisans had been obliged to fight several battles with the Chetniks, that they had seized large stores left behind by retreating Nazis, Fascists and Ustashi, and that free government was being reestablished in the re-liberated regions.

Fascist writers took notice of the government of the Liberation Veché as practiced in the Liberated Territory. It was no mere administration that they could ignore, but a democratic machine in action which worked effectively against the Axis scheme of fomenting internal strife and inciting one national or religious group against another. Russo, the Zagreb correspondent of *La Stampa*, wrote that "the Partisans have indeed become heirs to the Yugoslav idea." The Serbo-Croatian unity, which appeared dead and buried in '41, has been resurrected under their flag.

This Serbo-Croatian unity within the LF may be the only force in the world able to frustrate the Axis idea of winning the Balkans for Italy and Germany even if they lose the war.

Slovenian Partisans were "destroyed" by an Italian counter-offensive in November '42 after they had opened concentrated operations all over "Italian" Slovenia, apparently with the idea of rendering long-distance aid to the Americans in Algeria and the British in their chase of the *Afrika Korps*; but "destroyed" was Italian optimism.

A clipping from the March 16th *Slovenets* reads: "The [Italian] high commissioner of the Lublyana Region ordered confiscation of all movable and immovable properties owned by the insurgents." Some time earlier, according to a Reuter's story, the same high commissioner had been in a low state of mind, "fearing that the Liberation Front will resume action in Slovenia." He addressed a proclamation to the people of Lublyana and vicinity calling upon them to report all "criminals." Distraught, he let the following lines get into the proclamation: "The criminals are receiving too much cooperation from the population. It is almost incredible what is going on in this city: in broad daylight Communists perpetrate their crimes, but the spirit of Lublyana's young people has so degenerated that they assist the criminals to vanish without trace. When we arrest them, sometimes they have the audacity to say: 'If they killed him, it was because he was a traitor.' . . ."

Around that time, the Slovenian vice-premier in the government-in-exile, Mikha Krek, received a message from a fellow Clerical in Slovenia to the effect that Slovenians were between eighty and ninety percent pro-Liberation Front, and that he, Krek, should not think of

returning home "unless you come under the protection of British and American bayonets." A Liberation loan floated in Slovenia a short time earlier for the purpose of financing the "people's struggle" had been quickly subscribed not only in the liberated places but also in the occupied zone.

In both Italian- and Nazi-occupied Slovenia, the Partisans conducted battle and sabotage operations throughout the spring and early summer. The Nazi losses were so significant that late in April Himmler himself paused at a cemetery in Upper Carniola to put a wreath on the graves of Germans killed by "Bolshevik bandits."

In April the commander of the Italian air force in Slovenia and Dalmatia, General Mario Pricini, was killed by the Partisans, whose detachments here and there were accepting anti-fascist deserters from the Italian army as well as Serbians whom various Chetnik leaders had forcibly inducted into their depleted units.

Croatia, both inland and coastal, was the scene of extremely interesting military operations, sabotage, and political developments during the period from early March to late July '43.

Owing to their traditions of patience and passive resistance, the Croatian peasantry is slow to move; but when it moves—it moves. It appears that the Croatians were the last big South-Slavic group to develop large-scale anti-Axis warfare; by early '43, however, resistance was fiercer in Croatia than in most other sections of Yugoslavia.

The statement of the General Allied Headquarters for the Middle East mentioned the two hundred and fifty wrecked Axis trains in Croatia during '42. Then in a single month, January '43, traffic on the Zagreb-Fiume rail line alone was disrupted sixty-eight times. Trains began to run only in the daytime. German and Italian troops were unable to move except in convoys—as in the African desert. The Italian-Ustashi authorities had to erect bunkers and pill-boxes in the very center of Zagreb. Guerrilla bands popped up everywhere and attacked from all sides, in the mountains and the plains, in the woods and on river banks. The Croatians whom the German and Italian armies had "liberated from the Serbians" turned against the "liberators."

Apparently the center of this gradual crystallization of the Croatian spirit of resistance was the strange old man, Vladko Machek, head of the Croatian Peasant Party, who steadfastly held to his old belief that good would triumph over evil and as steadfastly rejected

repeated Nazi-Fascist demands that he take over the puppet government in Zagreb, of which Anté Pavelich and his Ustashi had made a horrible mess. In prison, Machek was dangerously ill of a recurrent disease, but he lived. The Axis experts in depopulation did not dare kill him for fear the Croatian reaction to his murder would be utterly unmanageable. They were afraid even of his dying a natural death; so they provided him with doctors and medicine. And, ill as he was and all but completely out of contact with his fellow party leaders, Machek effortlessly—perhaps unknowingly—inspired the people to resistance.

In '42 disconnected Croatian guerrilla units came into existence around separate villages. They called themselves by different names: Partisans, Green Cadres, Men-of-the-Woods, Liberators. By-and-by peasants, workers, students, former government officials, intellectuals, soldiers and officers from the Yugoslav army combined with larger groups. Some of their leaders were Communists and veterans of the Spanish Civil War; fewer, however, in proportion than in guerrilla organizations elsewhere in Yugoslavia.

During '39-'41 there were difficulties between the leadership of the Communist and Croatian Peasant parties. The trouble extended into the occupation period. For a time in '42 Communist publications in America and England criticized Machek. By the spring of '43, however, a patchup was effected at the insistence of Tito, who apparently is not only a great guerrilla leader but a statesman and negotiator of the first order. Tito was willing to work with anybody who was willing to help fight the Axis. He had failed to come to an agreement with Mikhailovich, but he succeeded with large sections of the Croatian Peasant Party and many lesser groups.

There had been Croatian guerrilla operations before this, especially in the coastal area; but now Croatia really blazed up . . . at a thousand points.

As I mentioned earlier, Vladimir Nazor, the renowned Croatian writer, a man in his seventies, escaped from Zagreb, where he had been closely watched. A few young Croatian Partisans led him into the mountains of the Liberated Territory. There he issued a statement beginning with the words "I have fled from shame to breathe freedom." He said that before he died he wanted to see Yugoslavia liberated, traitors destroyed, and the Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian people united under a democratic political system.

These aspirations became the Croatian Partisans' war aims. In June, when the National Liberation Veché of Croatia was created,

Nazor was elected its president. Like the rank and file, its executive committee contained people who called themselves Communists and those who went by other labels or none. They joined the central National Veché organization under the presidency of Ivan Ribar, and the Croatian Partisans subordinated themselves to Tito's military command.

During the writing of this chapter news came that the Partisans were besieging Zagreb.

Swinburne wrote: "Not with dreams but with blood and iron shall a nation be molded at last."

The first Yugoslavia was molded with dreams and chicanery, and from the top down. Now, within the Liberation Front, a new Yugoslavia is being molded with blood and iron, from its depths up . . . from within the resistance . . . in and from the raft.

But something else is being molded in that raft—war and postwar techniques, formulae, approaches and relationships. Within the Yugoslav LF movement, as in wartime Russia, various kinds of non-Communists (the great majority of the population, as in Russia) have been working together with so-called Communists on the basis of mutual war and postwar aims. This fact seems to me of crucial importance.

I say "so-called" Communists, for in the Partisan army and among the LF civilians that designation—after two years of almost unbelievable struggle for life and eventual freedom—lost the special, sharp, distorted meaning it had before the war. Not that Communists gave up the Communist ideology or that the non-Communists took it on. In the situation in which they found themselves most prewar labels became irrelevant long before the Comintern was dissolved.

The titles that began to mean something now were "Liberation Front" and "collaborationist" or "White Guard," "Partisans" and "Ustashi," "Chetniks" and "Nedichevtsi," "ally" and "enemy," "Mother Russia" and "the Anglo-Americans."

People who used to belong to many parties were working and fighting for something beyond the whole botch of fear-ridden counter-revolutionary impulses and unrealistic revolutionary notions of the previous twenty-five years, beyond the Glavnyacha and the Kossovo of '41, beyond the red herrings and the Stalinist-Trotskyite struggle, beyond the Moscow Trials and the Russo-German pact, beyond World War II. That something is as yet without a name unless it is "a New World."

Liberation and After: Probabilities and Possibilities

THE YUGOSLAV PARTISANS AND OTHER PEOPLE'S GUERRILLAS must feel their cause is anything but hopeless. Otherwise it is hard to understand what enabled them to go through the hell of their fearful warfare. They must see a future that looks at once possible and good. They must see the "stepping stones to a clear dawn" of which the dying guerrilla wrote to his unborn son.

The mass of material which has come out of Yugoslavia indicates that between battles and burials they talk a great deal about the shape of things to come. Their thoughts diverge somewhat when it comes to the details of postwar politics, but their differences are not serious. They are scarcely differences. The men and women in the Partisan and civilian LF organizations are sons and daughters of small nations; the big world outside their country is criss-crossed with uncertainties and opposite purposes, enveloped in a fog of vagueness, misunderstanding and distrust; and so their post-liberation thoughts are painfully tentative.

In August '43 it seems wholly possible that there is something to what Frants Snoy told me late in '42 about the "organic" ease with which Allied forces will get into Southern and Central Europe while the bulk of the Nazi *Wehrmacht* is trying to concentrate on keeping the Russians out of Europe. In fact the possibility is being discussed by radio commentators in the United States—on July 24th by WOR's John B. Hughes, for one. If Snoy was right things probably will be pretty wrong in Yugoslavia, in the Balkans, in Eastern and Central Europe when and if the United Nations beat the Red Army into those regions.

Tito was of course glad to establish military liaison with the

British-dominated General Allied Headquarters for the Middle East. As we have seen, he was always eager to work with anybody who fought the Axis. Its destruction and the liberation were first on his list.

But Tito—and the civilian LF leaders over him—noticed the generous reference to Mikhailovich that the Middle East Allied Headquarters made in its July 21st statement announcing the liaison with the Partisans. It said that Mikhailovich was still fighting the Axis in the spring and summer of '43 (not true); and that he personally was not collaborating with the Axis—only his Chetniks were, which was like saying that the Partisans had been fighting the Axis for two years but that Tito had had nothing to do with it.

The chances are that Tito said nothing about this to his new friends the Allied liaison officers. But I don't doubt that he wondered about it. Were the "Anglo-Americans" going to try to rehabilitate "Mikhailovich" in spite of everything? Why? Just to have him around as a counter-weight to the Partisans and for possible use against them later on? It must be remembered that the Roosevelt-Churchill tentative policy, as of the spring and summer of '43, is anti-Leftist and deliberately though subtly counter-revolutionary.

It is not improbable, too, that Tito and the LF leaders know of the support which Mikhailovich and his Serbian-Orthodox Chetniks have long been receiving from the Vatican, although perhaps half the Partisans are Catholics; also that, according to Stoyan Pribichevich, Archbishop Spellman discussed Mikhailovich in Rome as early as February '43, whereupon some of the largest Catholic newspapers in the world, published by hierarchies in Switzerland, Portugal and America (including the Brooklyn *Tablet*) were all for him. Tito would probably have laughed at the remark made in connection with the Vatican's pro-Mikhailovich policy by the Soviet diplomat in London: "Some people just don't care about religion." However, Tito and his civilian LF superiors could not help but worry about President Roosevelt's political tieup with the Vatican.

I believe that Mikhailovich—assuming the untruth of the rumor about his death—is both personally and politically beyond rehabilitation. But if I am wrong, and if the Partisans' new Anglo-American allies insist on his rehabilitation, it is not improbable that Tito will help them to make the effort. Their insistence will be based on military necessity: the Chetniks are still a power. Tito will simply take his chances on the future . . . and on Russian backing.

Tito supports a declaration of the National Liberation Veché

to the effect that the concrete solution of all political, social, economic and cultural problems affecting the future Yugoslav state must wait till after the war.

Nevertheless the thinking within the Liberation Front touches the fringes of the postwar question. Anxious to withdraw their country and the Balkans from the reach of Western imperialism, Partisans and LF civilians are tentatively ready to grasp a number of postwar probabilities and possibilities.

First of all, they are thinking of a Yugoslav federation whose territory will be somewhat larger than that of the pre-'41 Yugoslavia. It will include the Slovenian region with Trieste* and Gorizia, the peninsula of Istria, the cities of Rieka and Zadar (Fiume and Zara), and the Slavic islands in the eastern Adriatic which the London Pact of 1915 and the subsequent conferences gave to Italy after World War I; and also the Slovenian territory that remained in Austria.

This new Yugoslavia will be built from the ground up, largely under the new wartime leaders and people who will emerge after the liberation. Most of the politicians who "deserted" the country in April '41 will be barred from sharing in its re-creation. So will anybody else who considers himself "superior" to the general run of people. A republican form for the new state is assumed. The right of the peoples to fashion their own economic, political, social and cultural life is insisted upon. The trend of thought is toward collectivism, much of it to be organized around the village *zadruga* or cooperative.

How many autonomous or semi-autonomous units there will be in the Yugoslav federation is left to the future. Certainly there will be a united Slovenia, a Croatia, a Serbia, a Montenegro. Everyone realizes there is no solution for the Serbo-Croatian problem except within a federated Yugoslavia unburdened with a "central part." Whether the regional units with traditional names like Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina will be included in Serbia or Croatia or whether some will be separate small states in the federation, is to be left to future determination by people living there. The same applies to Macedonia. A good many Yugoslavs have read Stalin's views on the nationality problem in Yugoslavia which he stated in 1925, and are mindful of the fact that he is the only major figure in the contemporary world who has given the problem close and serious thought.**

*See Appendix II, page 484. **See Appendix III, page 504.

Perhaps Belgrade should be the capital of Serbia only, not of Yugoslavia as a whole. Perhaps a special capital should be built—like Washington.

The federation is to be created by merging principles which are at work in the United States, Switzerland and the Soviet Union.

There is to be a People's Bill of Rights: freedom of the press, assembly and religion. Religion, however, will be severed from state and local politics. It will have to rest on its spiritual soundness, on its appeal to the people, not on special privilege, vested interests, or Clerical politics.

The Croatian Sporazum of '39 is not recognized. All the nationalities and regions must start from scratch and achieve a new, inclusive sporazum or agreement.

The Yugoslav Partisans are in close contact with Leftist guerrillas in Bulgaria, Albania and Greece. They talk of bringing Bulgaria into the South-Slavic federation, depending on the will of the Bulgarian people. They know that for a long time many Bulgarians have considered themselves Yugoslavs, among them the late great Peasant leader Stambolisky who in 1914 rose in the Sofia parliament to exclaim: "I wish our Serbian brothers to win!" When accused by pan-Bulgarians of being a Serbian and a traitor, he replied, "I am neither a Serbian nor a Bulgarian, but a Yugoslav." His ideas still inspire the peasants of Bulgaria. They have refused to fight against Russia. The Bulgarians whom the Axis has used to butcher Serbians and Jews in Old Serbia and Greeks in Thrace are chauvinists resembling the Serbian Chetniks and Croatian Ustashi.

The idea of a still wider Balkan federation or confederation or union intrigues a great many Balkanites. It might begin with Greece and Yugoslavia, then take in Albania, Bulgaria (if not already in a new South-Slavic combination) and probably Rumania. But such a development is possible only within a democratic, republican system built on the principle of the people's right of self-determination; and only under leaders who come up from the people during or after the ordeal of occupation.

Such a federation would then be ready for inclusion in any bigger combination, including Sovietization. I believe that a majority of people forming the Yugoslav LF and the Bulgarian underground are eager or ready for Sovietization, but they know that, in view of the difficulties such a proposal might create between Russia and the Anglo-Saxon allies, the Soviet may not want them. The people at large are hoping at least for a Balkan federation or union.

Perhaps they can get an East-European one; Edouard Benes is for it.

Everything depends on the big United Nations; on whether or not the difficulties among them can be resolved.

It would be ideal if American, British and Russian troops simultaneously occupied Eastern Europe, and if they jointly held the region in a sort of international escrow, avoiding any rivalry. At the end of, say, six months or a year, free elections should be held in which the peoples—after listening to an open debate among their leaders—would decide whether they want to be made into one federation, or into several confederated federations, or to be Sovietized.

Certainly the trend toward federation is very strong. Most Americans with Balkan backgrounds, who instinctively reflect the sentiment of the "old country," favor it. A Greek American sent me a quotation by Syad Hossain, a former editor of the Bombay *Chronicle:* "Not fragmentation but federation must increasingly be the key to human affairs."

But even under the best imaginable leadership and in the best possible international atmosphere the re-creation of Yugoslavia herself, to say nothing of a Balkan federation or East-European confederation, will not be easy.

If liberation should be achieved by the autumn of '43, over a million Yugoslavs will have perished in warfare, by execution, starvation and epidemics at home or in German and Italian slavery, and by other methods of depopulation. This is proportionately the same as if the United States' war losses reached seven or eight millions. If liberation is delayed till the spring of '44, the country will be minus another two or three hundred thousand people. Should the Nazis make a stand on a line running through Yugoslavia, many more inhabitants will be ground out.

Hundreds of villages and towns are completely destroyed. Those partially ruined are almost beyond count.

When liberation comes, five to eight million people in Yugoslavia will be undernourished and inadequately clothed.

There will be at least half a million recently orphaned children.

The food supply will be low. For two years an enemy army of 525,000 men has been eating off the country whose production in '42 was less than half of normal, owing to guerrilla warfare and other dislocations. This will be one of the most serious aspects of the situation.

Food, clothing and medical relief from America has been promised the South-Slavs over short-wave radio and is being organized in Washington by the Office of Postwar Relief in the State Department, under Herbert H. Lehman. But they will be in need of rehabilitation and reconstruction aid over a considerable period. The plans for it which I have seen look very good.

If there is a Leftist-democratic development in the South-Slavic lands, I believe that tens of thousands of Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, Montenegrin, Macedonian and Bulgarian Americans and alien emigrants will temporarily or permanently return to the "old country" to help out perhaps in some such way as suggested in *Two-Way Passage*. Many of these will be skilled workmen and expert technicians.

In addition to almost general physical destitution there will be, as in all liberated countries, extreme personal and social unhappiness; many kinds of social and psychological pathology. I believe that the approximately three thousand American Relief executives and workers slated to go to Yugoslavia will do well to read these wise words of Jacques Maritain, whom I have quoted earlier in another connection: "Let us not believe that to help Europe . . . is an easy job. Europe is old and experienced, it has experience, a terrible experience, in wisdom as well as in wickedness . . . Europe will be sure to have learned a great deal and to know a great deal—a bitter knowledge of its own. It will have its own ideas and its own will as to the future of the world. . . . [Deeply] rooted will be an abiding flame of revolt against the evils suffered and the injustices of the past. . . ."

The will of the peoples may demand and force Sovietization; and Stalin may have to extend the borders of the Soviet Union for reasons of security. Walter Lippmann, in his *U. S. Foreign Policy*, seems to think that this is likely to happen in one way or another.

If Sovietization—with all it implies—does occur, it may be the simplest process. The Yugoslav or the Balkan federation would become a republic within the Soviet Union, and would most likely be headed by Tito or Dimitroff. Or there may be a number of small Soviet republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, *etc.*, according to the peoples' cultural problems, geography, and wishes. These small republics would probably be governed by members of the local Communist Party. Perhaps such men as Josip Vidmar and Vladimir Nazor and Colonel Orovich would become Communists if it should be politically necessary—the label will not matter.

They will have the precedent of Maxim Gorky who joined the Communists after Stalin got into power.

But, as of mid-'43 when the crisis within the United Nations is still unresolved, it seems probable that the situation immediately following liberation will favor a federation which is not immediately incorporated into the Soviet Union. The people will want such a federation to lean on Russia politically and economically.

If a pro-Russian federation or confederation system is allowed to develop, or develops regardless of British and American approval, then the Liberation Front formula of collaboration between Communists and non-Communists will stay in effect with some adjustments. People like Tito and Ribar and Nazor and Kidrich and Vidmar will continue to work together.

Assuming that this will be the prospect immediately after liberation, what will be the mood of the South-Slavic peoples?

The liberated folk will want first of all freedom, many freedoms—especially and most urgently, freedom from want and the danger of recurrence of what they just went through. But many, even before eating a substantial Relief meal, will draw a deep sigh of release from the extreme despotism of the foreign occupation armies, from the terrorism of the Gestapo and the quislings, from the horror of the whole "technique of depopulation." In many places they will have taken a terrible revenge on the retreating enemy army and on the Germans whom Hitler established on Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian farms. Now they will be ready for the future.

But I must make this clear: the people will demand a new situation—collective security, close unity or collaboration with neighboring peoples (including former enemies if under proper governments), a safeguard against any repetition of the period just ended. They will resent and fight any attempt to restore an *ancien régime*, to quick-freeze their revolutionary mood. Except for the short while in which to establish order necessary to life, they will not tolerate any arbitrary officials, their own or Allied; any Darlan or Giraud. They are Balkanites and they will kill them. If the Anglo-American forces come into the country with the wrong approach and protect the Darlan so no one is able to get at him, someone will be apt to kill the highest British or American officer he can get at. The South-Slavs and other Balkanites are through fooling around.

They will want democracy, an administration from the village government to the federal government freely elected by the people

as soon as elections can be held. The people intend to be the source of power, to carry on the techniques of government started in the LF.

They will want not only political democracy, but democracy in other departments of their lives. They will be tough on undemocratic or anti-democratic individuals and groups. They will favor a law providing punishment for anyone guilty of national or religious discrimination.

Freedom from want will have to be realized within a reasonable time. The people will not be satisfied with a reversion to the miserable prewar economic standards. The slogans will be: Full national liberty! Equality among peoples! Land for the peasants! Decent wages for those who want to work! Let's have new industries! Let's build dams in Croatia and Bosnia which will give electricity not only to Croatia and Bosnia but also to Serbia and Dalmatia and Albania or Greece or Bulgaria! . . .

The people will want to do something about the Ustashi, Chetniks and White Guards. Perhaps they will execute their leaders.

If Dr. Andriya Stampar is still alive and well, the South Slavs will want to make him a big man in the new state: for millions of people will need medical care and sanitation measures through the years.

They will take a good look at all the politicians and army officers returning home from "exile" with fat bank accounts in London and New York. Some they will kill. Others they will allow to sink into obscurity. A few they will use again. The Serbians of Serbia probably will make a thorough purge of their prewar politicians.

If the "Anglo-Americans" come into the country with a military government or any other authority which includes only American and British officers, the Yugoslavs will want to know why there are no Russian officers in the setup. They will insist upon adding them. Also, as one of the allies who have played an important role in the victory, they will want to have their own people in any such temporary government.

Relief will have to be so handled that it will not give prestige to would-be leaders objected to on any score by any considerable number of the people who fought the guerrilla war.

"Reconstruction," said Lincoln, "is a more difficult and a more dangerous task than either construction or destruction."

The South-Slavic and other Balkan peoples will need a great deal of help to help themselves through several years. I hope they will

get it. They will deserve it. Although generally unrecognized up to mid-'43, their sacrifices and their contribution to the victory over the Axis will have been proportionately greater than any other nation's.

But in helping them help themselves, the best, most lasting help will come to them—and to all the world—if the big United Nations achieve postwar unity.

Russia, Britain, America and the Vatican: 1943

THERE IS NEED OF TAKING A QUICK, FRESH LOOK AT WHAT modern life is all about, at the relationships and trends brought into it by the effects of the Russian Revolution—one of the most massive positive events so far in the twentieth century.

The Russian Revolution started out as an upheaval led by Marxian theorists with communistic international aims. By an extreme revolutionary stroke, Russia under Lenin frustrated Western imperialism by going full-blast counter to everything. When Stalin took over in the late '20s the international aims were shortened and narrowed, then postponed or abandoned. He saw no other way out. To him it looked as though a quick world social revolution was impossible. Also he thought that complete communism could not be achieved overnight even in Russia—not when she was in mortal danger of attack from the West and East.

Trotsky thought differently, but he lost out.

Under Stalin, everything was subordinated to preparations to meet the attack when it came. The Revolution was still revolution but it pulled back on itself. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, dominating the Comintern which controlled the parties in other countries, put the international Communist movement into the service of Russia's national purpose: to protect the newly-freed state from the imperialism which would surely have taken it over had Kerensky or some other weak "liberal" or "social democrat" remained at its head after World War I.

The Comintern and its changing "line" became a device of the power politics of a power in the process of becoming; a defensive device; an international weapon protecting Russia by harrying the imperialist powers and their satellites, giving them something to

worry about at home. It was also an agency through which to make friends for Russia abroad . . . and, as it happened, to create men like Tito and Boris Kidrich.

According to Webster, communism is: "A system of social organization in which goods are held in common; the opposite of the system of private property. . . . Any theory or system of social organization involving common ownership of the agents of production and some approach to equality in the distribution of the products of industry."

Russia experienced tremendous progress in various fields, but she did not develop a system to meet these definitions. She still has private property, also limited special privilege. There is common ownership of all of the important means of production, but the distribution of the products of industry is much further advanced in the United States than in Russia. In fact it could be argued that in a sense the USA is actually more "communistic" than the USSR.

The main goal of Russian industry for the time being was not to distribute the bulk of its products equally among her population but to prepare the Soviet Union for the approaching war, the war which hit her smack in the chest on June 22, '41. A "backward" country, Russia was badly handicapped. She stood alone and on the defensive for twenty-odd years.

This does not mean that the USSR is not a Communist state. Its own definition of communism—in the *Political Dictionary* issued by the Soviet Academy of Education—is "a higher form of human society in which exploitation of man by man has been removed, in which the means of production are commonly owned, and in which the development of the productive powers are limitless, and the opportunities for the evolution of human personality highest. . . . Communism has two phases of development: (1) socialism, already achieved in the Soviet Union, and (2) full communism, in the process of being achieved."

Western Europe and America considered the Soviet Union everything a country ought not to be. Some countries did not recognize her for a long time; the United States not until the middle '30s. The Western world never admitted that the Russian regime's chief sin was not its attitude toward political opposition and religion, but rather its initial revolutionary stroke, supported by substantial numbers of the awakened workers and peasants and soldiers, whereby it had seized and reserved for the peoples of Russia one-sixth of the globe, one of the richest sixths. By the same stroke it had removed

power from the hands of the aristocracy, the "upper class," the priests, the merchants, who under the tsars used it almost without exception to benefit themselves, and placed that power in representatives of the producers who use it with few exceptions to benefit—eventually, if not immediately—an infinitely larger number and wider range of people. These twin facts—*the withdrawal of her resources from Western imperialism* and *the location and purpose of power*—are the product, the result to date (which is what counts) of the Russian Revolution. And this result set a bad example to other exploited nations—bad from the point of view of Western imperialist powers. Even when they did technically recognize the USSR they did not accept her.

Meanwhile the social revolution in Russia proceeded only with what little was left over of time and energy and resources from the defense effort. Her regime was tough, headed by tough and purposeful men who tolerated no monkey-business from anybody inside the country. Many details were disturbing. But in retrospect they are subordinate to the country's immense achievement, climaxed in '41-'43.

From about '31 on, Russia's internal life was nationalistic. The necessity to prepare for defense was at the same time a means to cement nationalism and a means of social and cultural evolution. The multi-national system for instance (on which I touched apropos of Josip Vidmar), of letting the more than a hundred diverse nationalities of the Soviet Union be what they were culturally, was not only sound humanity but a political masterstroke. And many other aspects of Soviet internal life were conducive to better morale in the bulk of the people. Life was hard and scant, but a larger number than ever before could look ahead. There was great stress on science and exploration, on education, on medical care, on child and mother welfare. The woman was promoted to equality with the man and became one of the most impressive human types on the face of the earth. Native ability in the common man was tapped. As Willkie points out in *One World*, the new system raised sons of ex-serfs to high positions. All this was tied to defense. It served to give Russia the impetus to develop into a power with a chance to ward off the blow when it came.

Under Stalin, Russia got ready . . . and she withstood the imperialist attack.

Stalingrad established Russia as the strongest power on the European continent. Losing battles and territory and over ten million

people, having her cities and villages and dams destroyed, she was winning the war not only for herself but for the rest of the Allied world—with comparatively little material and military aid until the end of '42. Unlike all other continental lands, she stuck together and fought as one man.

Stalingrad crystallized the meaning of the Russian Revolution in terms of obvious, tangible result, of dynamic effect.

Although weakened in some ways by the war, Russia has now proved herself a Great Power. But of course she will have to maintain her position—with international politics of some kind. Her future politics will depend to a large extent on the British, operationally the biggest, most efficient power on earth. Meantime the Soviet Union is not going to take any chances; she will make her national position as impregnable as possible—in any way possible.

To venture a prediction: after the war and reconstruction, with the security of success as an established nation, it is not unlikely that the Russian people are going to have greater freedom for individual self-improvement and large social advances. The Kremlin hold will relax, permitting more individualism and democracy. In other words, Russia may evolve into a country that will come close to being the kind of country we in America and the people of Britain will not fear or distrust—the kind we want to become ourselves: for in some ways we are farther from democracy than Russia was even before '41. Race riots, for instance, cannot occur in the Soviet Union where racial discrimination is severely punishable by law.

But this prediction depends on whether Russia can come off the defensive, on whether she can feel secure. And that, as I say, will depend very much on Britain (and on how America crystallizes as a world power), while our own progressive evolvement will depend on whether or not we, Britain and the United States, can work out with Russia an approach, a practical formula, a technique of relationship akin to what the LF-Partisan element has developed in Yugoslavia.

The question is: how are we going to go about it?

Right now we are interdependent in a most urgent sense. Any and all procedures which we may institute ultimately, as nations which are part of One World, will depend largely on our smaller, day-to-day international actions in '43-'44, on how our relationships evolve from now on. The future of humanity rests mainly on what we—Britain, the United States, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—do

or permit to happen in '43-'44 in the unresolved political chaos of the European countries.

As Great Powers we will drift further apart or we will draw together in conjunction with and consequence of what we do in Italy and France, in Central and Eastern Europe.

In Eastern Europe particularly the situation is most immediately acute. It impinges directly upon Russia's near future and geography. And in this Russo-Anglo-American complexity, Yugoslavia seems to be the most urgent problem. There the three Great Powers will have to take one direction or the other—toward creative cooperation and sound internationalism or toward negative and defensive approaches, toward separation and eventual decline.

I believe the LF-Partisan organization in Yugoslavia is a pivot of and a key to the problem of relationships among the three leading United Nations. Politically mature, it knows what it wants and what it doesn't want. It wants to withdraw Yugoslavia, the Balkans, from imperialism and to free the lands and peoples in Southeastern and Eastern Europe as the United States and Russia once freed themselves. As we have seen, Russia is clearer and bigger in the consciousness of the South-Slavs in and behind the LF organization than any other country. They want to go the Russian way and Russia-ward.

Will Britain and the United States let them?

I think that in spite of the Atlantic Charter, in spite of the strong feeling of many people in Britain and America that Yugoslavia and other countries should be allowed to make their own choice, the probability is—in the midsummer of '43, immediately after the Quebec conference—that the leaders of the democracies will attempt to prevent their choosing Russia.

The reasons are both simple and complex, as simple and complex as the will of the leaders and the people who make up the democracies, as our ignorance about ourselves and about Russia and Europe, as the fear that dominates many of us.

When Churchill was at the White House in the spring of '43, the following analysis of the result of his visit appeared in the well-known "Newsgram" department of the conservative, careful, reliable Washington weekly *The United States News* (Vol. XIV, No. 22):

> Real Roosevelt-Churchill conference this time . . . was on world politics, world economics, on what to do with Italy, for instance, when she cracks up; what about the Balkans, Poland, even France.

It's a search for the basis of a British-American agreement on post-war, on who is to rule where, as well as how. . . . There does seem to be this line of thought:

In the case of Italy . . . A period of military rule to follow surrender. No purge. No left-wing revolution. No encouragement for labor rule. A recognition of anti-fascists in the former ruling group . . . maybe a constitutional monarchy accepted. . . .

In the case of France . . . Old ruling group, fascists excluded, probably would be restored, pending an election. No revolution, no encouragement to a left-wing movement.

Roosevelt-Churchill approach to postwar Europe is pictured as conservative; as not designed to give power to revolutionary forces turned loose by war. . . .

Great question mark in all this planning is Russia's attitude and influence.[11]

This is a far cry from the Atlantic Charter, that brave document of promises. The sincerity of the men who formulated it cannot be doubted. But to keep those promises now entails more than the leaders of Britain and America counted on. Stalingrad had not occurred when the Charter was written. Russia had not yet demonstrated her power. She was still a pariah country. She had been expected to collapse. . . . Now the whole picture is changed. Now to keep the promise of letting small nations do what they want involves many buts, ifs, question marks.

We—the official United States and Britain—are not so sure now whether we will let the small nations determine their future. It depends on *what* they want. We are not sure what we want them to want because we are undecided about what we—especially the United States—want for ourselves. Many of us are not so sure that we want to be democratic if it means giving up things we are used to. It may cost too much. Our leaders are assuming, however—somewhat undemocratically—that we have decided and that they are enacting our democratic will. They have made up our unmade minds for us, although their minds seem little less unmade.

In Yugoslavia the majority of the people know clearly what they want. What will it cost us and/or our leaders to let them have it? What will it cost to cooperate; or to oppose it? What are the buts, ifs, question marks that suddenly stand between us and the pursuit of democracy and the enactment of the Atlantic Charter?

Suppose the two Western Powers, whose armed forces are expected by the Western military experts to beat Russia's into Yugoslavia do let the Yugoslav LF yank the South-Slavic lands out of

the reach of Western imperialism. Suppose they let the same thing happen in other little countries in that region. Won't that mean that the British consent to a reduction of their strength and an enhancement of Russia's? Can Britain, as great a Great Power as she is, afford that? What about Rumanian oil and the Yugoslav mines? What about the passage to India, safe with the Balkans disorganized and the Mediterranean more or less under British control?

If the Russian aegis spreads over Eastern Europe, will Russia not be an imperialist power from the Anglo-American angle (or angles) even if the preponderance of East-Europeans are practically breaking their necks to become part of the Soviet Union? Will she not thus become a greater Great Power than Britain?

I believe that Churchill is afraid of this. And from his angle, rightly so. In the nick of time he organized Britain's resources of the past to keep her from going under. Is he to sit by now and permit steps which would eventually loosen up the British imperial system? On the other hand, Churchill must know that the Soviet Union is a tremendous factor in the inner excitement of his own people, especially the working classes and the young Britons of most social strata who are all for him as a war leader, as their "Winnie," but deep-down are more interested in the future than in his beloved empire.

Churchill is an intelligent man—and a Tory with a strong Kiplingesque hangover. There must be a terrific conflict in him as well as in Anthony Eden, his probable successor, also an intelligent Tory. They have been absolutely "correct" as Stalin's allies; and their intelligence got the upper hand after Stalingrad—but will it be able to keep the upper hand? Is their new approach firm and sincere enough to convince Stalin—haunted by Neville Chamberlain's Britain, by Munich and by everything else before and after Munich—so that he will react openly, sincerely, reciprocally?

If it is not, then Churchill and Eden—and the United States if our policy of no-policy continues to trail along—will certainly force the leadership of Russia to what official Britons and Americans will regard as imperialism. Stalin will see its necessity in order to make Russia impregnable. He will feel himself driven to move westward, at least to a line running north and south from some point in the Baltic to Trieste.

I do not believe Stalin wants to do this, for it will add tremendously to his already huge reconstruction task after the war. But if he is forced to this westward move, "forced" by what looks to him like reactionary Anglo-American foreign policy as evinced in Anglo-

American moves, his defense line will be considerably shortened. It will have mountains most of the way, instead of open plains as in '41. It will mean increasing the Soviet Union's population by more than a hundred million.

If Britain and the United States insist on a *cordon sanitaire* in Eastern Europe (a popular idea in the Foreign Office and the State Department up to the end of '42, and not yet unpopular), Russia cannot afford to take it lying down. In fact she has already indicated that she will not tolerate any such scheme however disguised.

Then where are we? I mean all of us—Americans, British, Russians and the peoples of continental Europe?

Up to August '43 President Roosevelt has suggested five times that he and Marshal Stalin meet. Why has Stalin refused? Of course the Russian commander-in-chief is "busy," to quote his alleged repeated excuse—he has over two hundred Axis divisions on his neck; even so, he might meet the American commander-in-chief who, in spite of being busy too, is willing to travel more than half way to their rendezvous, perhaps even all the way to Moscow. It is probable that Stalin will eventually meet Roosevelt, possibly before this book is published. But meantime he is playing his power politics just as we are playing ours—and his game is as dangerous as ours.

We don't like his, and he doesn't like ours. Stalin doesn't like our Darlaniad in Africa with all its extenuations which are more than extenuations to us. Nor our coolness toward de Gaulle, who is popular in France. Why do we favor Giraud, who has kind words for Nazism? Stalin cannot but be aware that in the summer of '41 and long into '42 much of official Washington looked wishfully to the eventual collapse of the Red Army.

Stalin doesn't like our pro-Franco policy in Spain while Franco's "blue divisions" are fighting his army on the Eastern Front. Nor that we have not yet completely broken with Finland. Nor the fact that we plugged the Mikhailovich hoax after the Partisans exploded it. Nor our pro-Vatican "policy." Nor that in August '43 we are intending to use quisling Nedich, who is willing to do a Darlan for us in Serbia.

When in Washington in May '42, Molotov was promised a second front that year. Stalin's definition of "second front" is any action by his allies which will draw at least sixty German divisions from his front. Up to midsummer '43 there has been no such action.

Stalin likes our Lend-Lease, but he knows and he wants us to know that with the material we are sending to Russia the Red Army is fighting our war as well as its own. . . .

That, in effect, is what I imagine Stalin's attitude is. He has to be shown—in action, in operational day-to-day policy—something which points to a common meeting-ground. His contact with Churchill wasn't very satisfactory. There were difficult moments and blunt words, for the interests of Stalin's Russia and Churchill's Britain, as they are, are at odds, and Stalin has the idea that Churchill, who at least has a policy, has Roosevelt, who hasn't, in his hip-pocket.

But, naturally, we don't like the situation either. We are a Great Power too. We have certain tentative ideas in reference to the west coast of Africa which more or less clash with some British ideas. So we don't like de Gaulle, who is Britain's man and Russia's, and we delay recognizing the French National Committee, and then recognize it only in a limited way. We refuse to permit Stalin's envoy to go to our North Africa, just as Stalin refuses to let us send observers to his front. Who does he think he is anyhow! . . .

From Stalin's angle, if we keep on this way, we may be dangerous in Europe. How are we going to use food relief? As we used it in 1919-'21, for counter-revolutionary purposes?[12]

No one outside of Russia knows what Stalin is really thinking about the postwar period. But there can be no doubt that he is looking at it from his angle. That is the point: he has his angle—a sharp one—as Britain and the United States have theirs. As Willkie remarked to him, Stalin keeps his eye on the ball. The trouble is that it is not the same ball that F.D.R. and Churchill are watching. Worse, they may not be driving to the same hole; they may not be even playing on the same course so far as the postwar world is concerned.

Whose fault is this? If we could look into Stalin's, Churchill's and Roosevelt's minds, we would get divergent replies to this question—and the three would be right from their respective angles, but perhaps all wrong collectively.

The war "looks very good" in midsummer of '43, but only from the immediate Anglo-American military point of view. From Stalin's angle it doesn't look so good, militarily or politically. Why do we delay starting a front in Western Europe? Why do we insist on getting at the Axis first from the southeast? To him it must appear as though the Nazis and the Anglo-American-Polish allies *may* draw together in the "organic" cooperation against him. And there is Turkey. She may come in at the end—what for? To make sure the Dardanelles will stay closed to Russia? To help the Allies reach the Balkans before the Red Army? To allow the British to get to the Black Sea and capture the Rumanian oil wells? . . .

The postwar picture doesn't look good at all. "There is a definite feeling," said Lisa Sergio, a New York radio commentator, in June '43, "that if Russia does not arrive at a very clear political and diplomatic understanding with the Western Powers which will give the Soviet Union security after the war, the Soviets will guarantee their own security by remodeling the border of Eastern Europe."

Although on May 26, '42, Russia and Britain signed a treaty of cooperation, and the British later reoriented their working policy and recognized Tito, Stalin must wonder what they will *really do* about Mikhailovich and the Chetniks. Will they darlanize Nedich? . . .

As this book goes to press, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill are working on Italy. "No left-wing revolution. No encouragement for labor rule." That is their first idea. They would like to keep the hot Italian revolution in the freezer where Mussolini put it in the early '20s.

I fear they will try to use the same approach to the Yugoslav, Balkan and East-European problem—if "Russia's attitude and influence" do not intervene. If her "attitude and influence" are excluded, the Anglo-American tentative "approach" to that problem will be no solution at all, not even tentative. It will be a sordid business if they use any past or present diplomats or members of the inner clique of the Yugoslav—or, for that matter, Greek—government-in-exile.

Personally, I think "Russia's attitude and influence" will intervene before the Churchill-Roosevelt procedure gets very far. I believe even if Snoy's "organic" end of the war does come true, Russia will not be powerless. She is starting to develop moves of her own—witness the Free German National Committee announced in July '43 which is probably capable of creating chaos in the German army before the Anglo-American forces get to Germany.

Perhaps many of the problems stressed here were solved at Quebec, or will be solved at the conferences of the Allied experts on foreign affairs, to be held during the fall of '43. Others will be dealt with by the Mediterranean Commission. But still others, no less difficult, will spring up unless the change in relationships among the United Nations is fundamental.

There is a complex interplay of purposes, of international and domestic politics. Often it is difficult to determine where one begins and the other ends.

Take Franklin D. Roosevelt's role in the current act of the inter-

national drama. His conduct of the military war in '42-'43 has been magnificent, even if he has (perhaps inevitably) neglected domestic problems. His postwar politics, however, are another matter. Especially his pro-Vatican game.

The latter is nothing new. It led him in the late '30s, into his unfortunate negative attitude toward the Spanish loyalists who were defending the government legally elected by the people. This in effect contributed to Franco's victory. The same policy was behind the Hapsburg fiasco in '42. It is one of the central factors in his conservative, not to say reactionary, trend of thought about Europe.

I am not anti-Catholic; I am, as I have said earlier, anti-Clerical; and my anti-Clericalism applies not only to outfits like the Slovenian Clerical party and to small-time Clerical politicians like Frants Snoy and Mikha Krek, but also to the Vatican's international Clerical politics which are all tied up with vested interests in various countries.

I believe that in playing with Clerical politics—even if with tongue in cheek, as I suspect; even if with the best diplomatic intentions concerning Spain and Italy and a possible rapprochement between the Vatican and the Soviet—President Roosevelt has made a serious mistake foreshadowing tragic international and intra-American consequences. The "Catholic issue" is not discussed in the American newspapers and magazines or over the American radio because nearly everybody is afraid to touch it. None the less, the issue exists. It is hotly whispered not only by the K.K.K. but by intelligent, highly situated non-Catholics in the United States. Someday it will burst out—in part because of Mr. Roosevelt's close cooperation with the American hierarchy and the Vatican. It will become a domestic political issue in the United States. And when that happens it will be a difficult time for America.

There are explanations and extenuations. The President has been led into working closely with the heads of the Catholic Church in connection with his Good Neighbor policy toward Latin America where the Church is a great power. Also by his own political problem in reference to '44, which of course has enormous bearing on the postwar world and which I understand not unsympathetically. And also by his tendency (perhaps inevitable in so highly placed a man) to think of groups in terms of their leaders—of Catholic voters in terms of the attitudes and purposes of the Pope, Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop Spellman and the American Catholic hierachy as a whole, which—unlike the American Catholic laity—is preponderantly reactionary and isolationist.

Part of the hierarchy is busy night and day with Clerical politics in reference to the Western Hemisphere, politics whose ethical content is no higher than was that of the politics of the Reverend Dr. Lambert Ehrlich in Slovenia. The American Catholic hierarchy is fiercely anti-Communist. Most of it is very anti-Russian. Some of it is more widely anti-Slavic. It consists largely of bishops of German and Irish ancestry, and some of them consciously or unconsciously discriminate against Polish, Slovak, Czech, Slovenian and Croatian American priests and their parishes. Men of this stripe are the wrong kind for the President of the United States to try to appease with a reactionary foreign policy, however tentative, in the hope of their support in '44 should he deem it necessary to run again.

As for Churchill, I have been thanking Heaven for him ever since the dark spring days of '40. My admiration for most of Churchill's Britain is deep and endless. But I am antiBritish imperialism. I have absolutely no use for the type of British imperial agents I encountered in Yugoslavia eleven years ago, and who were in charge of "Mikhailovich" up to January '43. They are preferable only to the Nazi *gauleiters* and their Italian counterparts.

I am intensely pro the majority of British youth discussed by Barbara Ward, foreign editor of *The Economist* (London), in the July '43 *Foreign Affairs* (New York) after her survey of what young Britons in the armed services are thinking. "Young opinion in Britain is radical," she writes. "Young people in Britain want change. They see that the times are revolutionary." I am as much for these Britons as for the Yugoslav Partisans.

I agree with the new British Commonwealth Party's views: "An age is ending. A whole way of life is breaking down and is reaching its end. . . . The future struggles to be born. . . . There is no use of patching up a way of life that has changed into a way of death. We believe that British people will not turn back to the old world, but will pioneer toward a new social order." These Britons favor "self-government for the colonies; immediate freedom for India."

So does the Liberation movement in Yugoslavia. The Partisans there were anti-British up to '43; they had no use whatever for the British agents who were playing along with Mikhailovich. They still have no use for the British empire, proudly cherished by Mr. Churchill as late as June 30, '43 in his Guildhall speech in London. For that empire has been consistently inimical to the interests of the Balkan peoples. Its agents always helped to deepen Balkan chaos, to keep the Balkans disorganized and from becoming a power. And they

did that because if the peoples there came into power, they might follow their pro-Russian feelings; then what would the anti-Russian Bosporus policy amount to? The British Mediterranean route to the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific might be less secure. To avoid that, the Balkan countries had better be ruled by amenable reactionaries who disposed of peasant leaders by murdering them—Stambolisky in Bulgaria, Radich in Yugoslavia. To avoid that, in '34 when a Bulgarian military *coup* headed by Colonel Damien Velchev brought in a government opposed to King Boris because of his pro-Nazi policy, a British cruiser anchored off Varna as a significant demonstration of the favor Boris enjoyed in British government circles. . . .

The Yugoslav Partisans object to this sort of thing. And at this writing there is every reason to think that Churchill and Roosevelt still are for it.

But whether they are or not, the outstanding point I am making here is that the South-Slavic and other Balkan peoples are anti-British empire. They want to yank the Balkan lands out of the reach of imperialism, whether Italo-German or British.

All through '42-'43 British "experts" on the Balkans, in and out of the Foreign Office, have been putting together all sort of plans for the region. Among them are plans for a Balkan federation which would include Turkey. All of them would leave the Balkans under a subtle British control. In some, the "United Nations" (meaning the British) administer such key ports as Trieste and Salonika. One goes so far as to make the peninsula into a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations—of the British empire actually, for the Balkans would not attain the status of Canada or Australia in a hundred years. The initial Balkan reaction to any such British domination would be violent and radical; British rule would have to be even more reactionary than it intended, with the result that the Balkans would become a Malaya or Burma, rather than a Canada or South Africa.

The Yugoslav LF-Partisan organization is opposed to all such plans. So is Russia. Should Britain (and America) insist on any of these schemes in order to help her keep open the passage to the Orient and also to keep the Russians out of the Mediterranean, then Stalin is apt to insist on outright Sovietization of all of Eastern Europe and the chances are he will achieve his end. The majority of the Slavic peoples in the region would be for it. Under those circumstances, so would I

But the probability is that if the USSR and the Western democracies clash so strongly that they are each forced to withdraw into isolation and into even more separate power politics, our world will be a pretty tough place to live in.

I think there is only one alternative that is sound and within which the small nations would have a chance to work out the democracy they want: A large federation or confederation comprising the now unresolved East-European area—a sizeable state that would be a bridge, a meeting-ground between Russia and the West. Because of its national-emotional impulses and/or geography it would lean on Russia; it would go Left socially and economically and would follow the Soviet multi-national cultural policy; but it would also maintain commercial and cultural connections with countries to the west . . . as far west as the United States whose population includes some twenty or thirty million people who are immigrants or descendants of immigrants from East-European lands.

What are the chances for such a federation? Slim, but I think not hopeless.

Western imperialism is loath to give up. Its eyes have long ranged over Eastern Europe, full of ineffective small nations, some of them rich in raw resources. As I have suggested, even the Eden-Churchill Britain with its suddenly enlightened pro-Soviet policy still eyes the region. It wants to work with the Soviet, but at the same time to save what it can of its old "interests" in the Balkans and further up the line. And a good many high-ranking officials in Washington and financially powerful men in New York and Chicago whose relations with West-European imperialists have always been stronger than their understanding of the East-European small-nations problem, or of the Russo-Anglo-American situation, are asking one another: "What are we going to get out of this war?"

Off and on, it looks as though matters in the post-war world will be all in favor of these people. Then when one tries to see deeper, it seems that they possibly won't. Simultaneously with the negative forces, positive ones are at work. While the rivalry and fear are pushing us apart, other factors are bringing us together—sometimes in spite of ourselves.

There is the realization of mutual strength. England, Russia and Britain cannot afford to be enemies in a post-war world.

There is the insistence of commerce—the needs and wants of people—on the production and interchange of the goods of the earth in open trade.

There is the fact that "air is international," that the development of the airplane industry has made the world whole. There is the realization that in a dog-eat-dog world any isolated nation will run the risk of being blotted out.

There is the world-wide nature of the problems facing us. They demand international, not solely national solutions. National solutions alone, during the period between the two world wars, proved to be completely ineffective. And this war is heavily underlining our interdependence.

Ideas are international. And the basic universal will of most of humanity is toward an orderly peaceful world with a chance to bring about progress. Even in an isolated, non-cooperating world, ideas overlap; isolated wills tend to converge into united insistence.

In the current emergency, not to mention the peace-making later, differing forces are constantly rubbing shoulders, rubbing off sharp edges. Under these conditions it is inevitable that nations, peoples will be affected by one another. Whether the interchange is open or closed (suppressed), Britain and America will affect Russia and she them. It is also inevitable that the varying lags will be considerably reduced.

Just as the western nations will have to catch up on their lags such as the purposes of power and the encouragement of the entity of minority groups and their cultural diversity, so Russia will need to catch up with the western nations in many fields: wider distribution of goods, a higher standard of living, open opposition politics. And not only Russia and the democracies, but the world.

Russia is already catching up on some of her lags. In her time of trial during '41-'43, she re-knit the historical continuity she had attempted to sever. She re-admitted to public esteem the people and events which had contributed anything of value to pre-Soviet Russia. On the other hand, the western nations will have to guard themselves from severing their own continuity, from wrapping themselves up in the faded banners of the past, and cutting themselves off from the evolving future.

Whether we like it or not, we are immersed in a revolutionary process. It is a matter of many rapid and insistent evolutionary tendencies. All this is bewildering and disconcerting to many people, particularly to those of privilege, position and power, and to others who, accustomed to living in little corners of their own world, are wondering what crazy changes they will have to submit to if this becomes One World. Many of them, to simplify the big forces they

can't grasp, and the fear they can't formulate, simply blame "Communism" and Russia for everything.

This widens the gap, holds up the lags, strengthens the impeding forces so that a third world war may result before the progressive forces have sufficiently evolved. Another world war would set us way back—all of us, into tight little corners, into cells. To prevent such an eventuality it is necessary for people to examine their fear, to put their wholehearted democratic weight and collective will behind the acceleration of the social evolution into a cooperative world.

There may be a couple of years' time in which to do this. The American people particularly will have to do their share, for without clearly knowing it, they are one of the leading protagonists in the international drama.

Again: there is need of a quick, fresh look into all of our conceptions and actions.

Our American policy so far during World War II—the policy of no-policy, trailing in England's footsteps—has been a curious business.

In a way, our history has been very similar to Russia's. We have had our Revolution whose essential purpose was the same as the result, the effect of the Russian Revolution. This is made abundantly clear in the scholarly volume *Origins of the American Revolution* by John C. Miller, published in August '43. The American feat at the end of the eighteenth century withdrew a great part of the Western Hemisphere from West-European imperialism. As Mr. Miller points out, it was an ideological revolution, primarily an economic struggle; part of the same vast international drama of which the present period clearly is but another act.

Then we pulled in our horns, as Russia pulled in hers in the late '20s. But the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were milder than the twentieth century; also geography favored us enormously. At any rate, we succeeded in developing the country . . . and now we find ourselves a Great Power, potentially the greatest. But we are not yet psychologically ready to act as modern Great Powers should. We don't know yet what we have done; who and what we are, what we have to do next. Our affairs are largely in the hands of traditionalists who fear the future and the people.

It may not be very obvious at this moment, but I think that right now—in '43-'44—we Americans are enmeshed in the most stupendous crisis of our whole national career . . . as are the Russians . . .

as are the British. In 1776 we fought the British for independence; now here we are in a war that is mainly pointless if we do not accept what it has proved—that every part of the world is interdependent.

The Russians and the Americans are two brand new world powers, so new they have scarcely got into action. Meantime the initiative in major political steps remains with Britain who is vastly experienced and has the most complete organization on earth, superior even to that of the Catholic Church. I think things ought not to be left to her. From today's point of view, much of her imperial record is bad even if it can be argued that the Empire has served a good purpose in preventing some wars; and her geopolitical position is precarious, and apt to swing her opportunistically in any direction at any time.

The principle of empire is obsolete.

In a very real sense, we Americans are in a similar position to that of the Russians.

We Americans have carried democracy farther in some respects than any other people, but we have never been truly democratic. For over a century and a half we have had our back turned on the world. We were isolationist, we were nationalistic, out to safeguard what democracy and prosperity we had. While more or less democratic at home, we were in many ways undemocratic in foreign policy. Walter Lippmann, although he words it differently, shows this clearly in his little book *U. S. Foreign Policy.*

Except for the first few years after the outbreak of her revolution, Russia has also been isolationist behind her "international" façade.

Britain is an entirely different story. She was always internationalist in an imperial-trade way. But even within her scheme there has been social advance—great in England herself. Bearing "the white man's burden," she was the most privileged nation in the world; the most admired, envied and hated. We turned against her, then Germany, then Germany again; now Russia is against her, and much of India would like to do what we have done; and the Balkans want to get clear of imperialistic tentacles. Her privileged position didn't really pay in the long run.

Now something new is needed in the world—a working formula of interdependence, a synthesis of national interests within which Britain would receive her due share, but no more so than Burma or Bulgaria. America would receive hers, but no more so than Asia or Albania; and Russia no more than Rumania. Beyond the defeat of Hitlerism, World War II has been worth fighting only if the twentieth century ends as "the century of the common man"; and that can

happen only if special privileges cease not only between men and men but also between nations and nations.

If this does not happen, World War II will turn out to be only a Caesarian struggle, certain to be followed by another.

If it does happen, it will be in great part because the American people will have insisted on it.

They have the power to insist on it. The question is—will they?

There is a vast democratic element in the United States which favors international cooperation. There always has been. But it has never been organized, formulated into a factor in our foreign policy. Most of the State Department is unaware of it; the President seems to prefer to play along with established organized groups. The only two leaders who have addressed themselves to this democratic element are Henry Wallace and Wendell Willkie. Nobody else of any importance has done anything about it. So it is vague and scattered—unfunctional. It performs mostly by taking up collections for the Red Cross, for British and Chinese and Greek relief; by going abroad as ambulance drivers before we get into wars ourselves; by forming little brigades—like the Lincoln Brigade in Spain.

There is, always has been, a huge scattered group in the United States with the feeling that humanity is all of a piece. In two months it bought over a million copies of Willkie's *One World*. It is the group that is the most democratic and progressive at home. Its internationalism is a natural extension of its domestic democracy.

Conversely, the most undemocratic forces at home are the ones that are consistently undemocratic in their thinking about the rest of the world. They are the fearful people; fearful of change, of influences from beyond the fence. Some avow they want democracy above all; that is why they don't want anything changed. They seem not to know that democracy is a process and that if it does not go on, does not change things and people, it stagnates, regresses, turns into something else. They, the fearful ones, the conservatives, want the country to sit tight—and let the rest of the world scratch for itself. They know nothing about communism; it's a bogey to them. They live on bogeys. They fear the future altogether (now it is called "the postwar world") and if it looks to them as though it will be anything but their conception of "democracy," they will quickly call it "communism." They cannot conceive what real democracy might be. Their program is simple: No change lest we lose the country the Founding Fathers created. It does not occur to them to create something themselves—they are uncreative people. That is the most important fact

about them. And they do not see that they are in danger of losing what they avow they want—not to "communism," but to fascism.

Their actions and reactions are automatic, unthinking; actions and reactions which play into the hands of the small but deliberate, thinking element which doesn't want progress, and knows why. It wants to retain what it has and to get more. It is organized on a dozen fronts. It is ever active, aggressive. This is the imperial-minded group that on the one hand is ultra-isolationist, scoffing at internationalism, while with the other it plucks the international plums. It encourages the fears of the larger, undeliberate element and together they make a pretty big force, the reactionary force, in America's national life.

They welcomed Mussolini in Italy, saw nothing wrong with Hitler, accepted decorations from Germany's Goering and Yugoslavia's King Alexander, and opposed the recognition of Russia. They thought Neville Chamberlain was a great statesman and Munich a splendid piece of diplomacy.

They are anti-Russian now in '43, brewing World War III while we are still in the midst of World War II. They work against Russia while she is fighting the Nazis. They are closer and always have been closer to the fascists than to the basic democratic tendencies of America.

Some of them are frank in saying that they want a vulnerable Europe, a lot of "backward" countries they can exploit without responsibility, without limitations by a democratic-minded people such as they have to cope with at home.

Some are very big people indeed. If you want their names and to find out how they work, read *Under Cover*, by John Roy Carlson, published in July '43.

To repeat: with the rest of the world, the United States is going to come to its testing-ground in the formulation of the peace. Basically and much simplified, the lineup will be: the imperial-minded elements and their timid, uncreative supporters *versus* those who are unafraid and are looking ahead to world interdependence. It is no coincidence that the undemocratic forces within the United States and Britain are undemocratic and isolationist or imperialist or both in their world outlook. It's organic.

No one knows how strong Russia will actually be after the war. If she is not strong enough to challenge the reactionary forces in Britain and America if they push their way to the top, as they very well might, then she may be forced into reaction herself. Back on her

defensive, she may try to become a little like the Western powers—in anything but the best sense. I think that Joseph E. Davis and other big capitalist-industrialists who are making up to Russia have this in mind. I think Churchill is hoping that Stalin will become one of the boys.

The British have, as I say, the greatest organization in the world. The Vatican has the second greatest, but not a direct rival of the first. In '43 the United States tags along behind them.

But Russia is a possible rival to both these organized forces. So she has to be pulled into line. Britain reorients her policy; the Vatican tries to negotiate with the Soviet.

The USA and the USSR have enough in common, historically and currently, to get together without too much difficulty. I think F.D.R. would like to take the initiative in this, would like to be a progressive leader of the world, but is afraid of the reactionary trend at home. He feels he must appease it. So he goes reactionary. He is caught in a frightful political contradiction—with the American people and partly because of them.

Therein is danger.

In short, the future depends to a very large extent on the vast democratic element in America. If that element can get organized before the autumn of '44, it will have a chance to make itself felt in a formulated foreign policy, in the acceptance of America's world responsibility; a chance to fight the battle of democracy at the peace settlement.

Who can give it leadership? Willkie? Wallace? Can Roosevelt extricate himself from his political failure of '42-'43 and lead again?

If the democratic element gets hold of itself and becomes a power and wins out, it will mean victory all around—domestically and internationally; in Illinois and in Eastern Europe, in Easton, Pennsylvania, and in Bikhach, Bosnia. It will mean progress in America, Britain and Russia; a chance for Europe.

A Letter

IN AUGUST 20, '42 A YOUNG MAN IN SLOVENIA WROTE A LETTER to his brother in the United States. The various notations on the back of the sheet indicate that it somehow got out of Yugoslavia to Egypt, thence to London, thence to America, where it was delivered on June 19, '43. It reads:

For an endless time we have not had any word of you or your wife. Now and then on the radio we hear words spoken in America which stir hope but give no assurance.

Mother and all the brothers and sisters are still living today. Of our relatives many are already lost.

Suffering is extreme. The storm with metal hail rages on. Losses are enormous for our small nation. We ask for urgent help, or it will be too late.

All of us send you, your wife and all your friends in America our greetings.

THE END

Names of Serbian, Slovenian and Croatian people and places are phonetically spelled in *My Native Land* in order to facilitate their pronunciation by Americans not familiar with Slavic forms.

I hope readers of this book will write me their reactions to it and tell me why they agree with it or don't.

Copies of a bulletin called *War & Postwar*—formerly *In Re: Two-Way Passage*—will be sent to readers requesting them. The bulletin developed from the pro and con discussion of *Two-Way Passage,* published in '41. This book is in a way a sequel to it and *The Native's Return.*

Notes and Appendices

Notes

1. (Page 10)

See the chapter "Doctor Hercules" in *The Native's Return.* In the middle 1930s Dr. Andriya Stampar entered the service of the Health and Hygiene Division of the League of Nations and went to China to work for three years for the Chinese Government. His achievement there received favorable mention in Edgar Snow's book *Red Star Over China.* Early in '39 Dr. Stampar lectured in most of the medical schools in the United States and returned to Yugoslavia shortly before Hitler attacked Poland.

2. (Page 30)

There are several versions of this letter by the dying Partisan guerrilla. One appeared in a London paper called *The People* early in '43. Stoyan Pribichevich, while in London, got hold of another and sent it to *Time,* which published it in February '43. The Pribichevich version was reprinted in *Readers Digest* and broadcast over "The March of Time" program.

3. (Page 45)

According to an article by Alfred P. James in *The Dictionary of American History,* "Partisans" is an old American term for irregular soldiery. In American history so-called "Partisan bands . . . first appeared in the series of wars between the British and French which went on at intervals from 1669 to 1763. In these wars, groups of frontiersmen in defense of their homesteads formed irregular military bands. . . . Sometimes they made expeditions into the enemy's strongholds, as in John Armstrong's raid on Kitanning in 1756. On the opening of hostilities in the American Revolution, Partisan bands appeared, among them the 'Green Mountain Boys' in the North and the followers of Pickens, Marion and Sumter in the South. In the Civil War, Partisan bands or corps came into existence, of which Mosby's Rangers were merely the most famous. Smaller bands existed in Kentucky, Kansas,

Missouri, Arkansas and the Indian territory. Of these Albert Pike's Partisan band of Confederates, composed largely of Indians, was possibly the most significant. . . . At the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907 efforts were made to bring Partisan guerrillas under regular military rules and control." . . . Partisans were also important in the Napoleonic Wars and in the Russian Civil War in 1917-1921.

4. (Page 124)

Sometime in '42 a Liberation Front court passed a death sentence on Kosmayats; a Partisan execution squad found its way into German-occupied Belgrade and killed him, according to a Free Yugoslavia radio report.

5. (Page 139)

The Franz Rosenzweig quotation is from his work *Der Stern der Erloessung* (The Star of Redemption), originally published in Berlin in 1930.

6. (Page 213)

In connection with these "Background" chapters, I read the following books in addition to those mentioned in the text:

World Without End, by Stoyan Pribichevich. (New York, 1939.) A "must" for all interested in Southeastern Europe.

History of Serbia, by Harold W. V. Temperley. (London, 1917.)

Zgodovina Slovencev, by Milko Kos. (Lyublyana, 1933.)

Zgodovina Srbov, by Silvo Kranjec. (Prevalje, 1927.)

Zgodovina Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev, by Anton Melik. (Lyublyana, 1919.)

Zgodovina Slovenskega naroda, by Dr. Josip Gruden. (1913.)

Obzor Spomen-Knjiga 1860-1935. (Zagreb, 1935.) A veritable mine of material on the Yugoslav movement.

7. (Page 226)

Translation by Owen Meredith, from his *Serbski Pesme; or, National Songs of Serbia* (London, 1861). The little volume is available in some of the larger American and English libraries, and is procurable through second-hand booksellers.

See also *Kossovo: Heroic Songs of the Serbs,* translated by Helen Rootham (Boston, 1920). The book contains a historical preface by Professor Janko Lavrin of Nottingham University, England, a Slovenian by birth.

8. (Page 241)

Translation by John Bowring, from his *Serbian Popular Poetry.* (London, 1827.)

9. (Page 394)

See the Reverend Bernard Ambrozic's article "Yugoslavia's Religious Strife Is Exploited by Her Enemies" in the January 2, '43 *America* magazine.

10. (Page 394)

The poem "The Rebels" was originally published in Belgrade late in 1936. The translation which I quote appears in a pamphlet *Yugoslav Women Fight for Freedom,* by Professor Pauline Albala, published in '43 by the Yugoslav Information Center, New York.

11. (Page 458)

Reprinted, by special permission, from *The United States News,* an independent weekly on national affairs, published at Washington.

12. (Page 461)

The political role of American food relief in Europe during 1918-20 is revealed in the official statements and in the writings of the men who played it. Said President Wilson in his message to Congress on February 24, 1919, when he asked for $100,000,000 for European relief purposes:

"Food relief is now the key to the whole European situation and to the solution of peace. Bolshevism is steadily advancing westward, is poisoning Germany. It can not be stopped by force, but it can be stopped by food, and all the [Allied] leaders with whom I am in conference agree that concerted action in this matter is of immediate and vital importance.

"The money will not be spent for food for Germany itself, because Germany can buy its food, but it will be spent for financing the movement of our real friends in Poland and to the people of the liberated units of Austro-Hungarian Empire and to our associates in the Balkans.

"I do not see how we can find definite powers with whom to conclude peace unless this means of stemming the tide of anarchism be employed."

Vernon Kellogg, Herbert Hoover's collaborator in the relief work in Europe, says in his book *Herbert Hoover, The Man and His Work* (1920):

"It is from my personal knowledge of his achievements in this extraordinary position during the first eight months after the Armistice that I have declared my belief earlier in this account that it is owing more to Hoover and his work than to any other single influence that utter anarchy and chaos and complete Bolshevik domination in Eastern Europe (west of Russia) was averted. (Page 267.) . . . Somebody had to do something that counted. So Hoover did it. It was not only lives that had to be saved; it was nations. It was not only starvation that had to be fought . . . it was Bolshevism. (Page 276.)"

In Kellogg's book there are several references to T. C. C. Gregory, one of Hoover's men in southeastern Europe, who was instrumental in helping to frustrate the revolutionary movement in Hungary in 1919-'20. That frustration led to the establishment in power of the reactionary element headed by Horthy, who in '41 declared war on the United States.

The June, 1921, World's Work magazine contains a boastful article by Gregory, entitled "Overthrowing a Red Regime."

How did the Hoover organization behave in Russia? In No. 8, Series 2 of the American Relief Administration Bulletin we find the following report:

"The American Relief Administration's work in the liberated regions of Russia has followed closely the fortunes and mishaps of the forces arrayed against Bolshevism. From the beginning of the relief in April 1919, its field of operation has enlarged or contracted as Rodzianko's and Yudenitch's [counter-revolutionary forces] advanced or retreated. . . .

"The work of feeding Pskoff came to an end on the 26th of August with the capture of that city by Soviet troops. Part of the district remained in the possession of the Whites and there the work was carried on as before.

"There was little change during September until the offensive against Petrograd [by Yudenitch] began. September the 28th saw the White troops under way in the direction of Luga and the ARA European Children's Fund following the army and feeding the children of the districts newly liberated. . . .

"On the 15th of October, General Yudenitch announced that Petrograd would fall within three days. On the 16th, Krasnoe Selo was captured and the ARA immediately organized kitchens there."

Petrograd was not taken by the Whites, Yudenitch fled, and the idea of ARA kitchens in Krasnoe Selo was given up. Later on, American relief got into Soviet Russia, in charge of that amazing American, Col. Raymond Robbins, who was not counter-revolutionary. On the whole, however, our relief work after World War I was just that.

APPENDIX I

Who Killed King Alexander?

Two years after the Marseilles assassination, in the October 10, '36 issue of The Nation *I published an article under the above title:*

I did not admire King Alexander. I predicted his eventual end at the hand of some assassin in consequence of his misrule more than a year before it occurred. I was shocked by the news of the outrage, but I was not surprised. None the less, ever since the horrible event, which I studied closely in the excellent news films exhibited in America, I have been puzzled by all sorts of things connected with the assassination. The incident is one of the great murder mysteries of recent years.

We cannot be sure even about the identity of the assassin. By certain marks on his body it was allegedly determined that he was Vladimir Georgieff Chernozemski, a young Macedonian *komitadji.* But I have word of rumors in the Balkans that Chernozemski is alive, and the assassin might easily have been another person. His mangled body was put away in great haste "in a Marseilles cemetery in the presence of two detectives and a grave-digger," and both the French and the Yugoslav governments did everything possible to limit the investigation which was held immediately after the outrage, while they exploited the assassination for their own political ends. In Yugoslavia free discussion of the King's death was not allowed, nor could the news films be shown; and even now under the Stoyadinovich regime, when censorship is slightly relaxed in many other respects, not a word can be written about the "mystery."

I do not wonder, of course, nor does anyone else, why the assassin pulled the trigger. What puzzles me is this; why was the assassin *allowed* to kill the King? I can put my query thus: why did French officials responsible for the King's safety give the assassin almost direct aid in the commission of his deed? Or thus: who, besides the Macedonian and Croatian terrorist organization wanted the assassin to succeed and induced the French officials to make the killing of the King easy?

King Alexander's visit to Paris for the purpose of strengthening Yugoslavia's politico-military and economic relations with France was rumored throughout Europe for weeks in advance of the official announcement. Alexander was going on a mission of vast importance not only to Yugo-

slavia and France but, since peace or another war might be the issue, to Europe. There is no doubt that Alexander's personal secret service knew that terrorists intent on killing him had lately entered France; the King made no secret of his fear of assassination. Shortly before his departure for France he discussed with Ivan Mestrovich the poor prospects of his living much longer. The famous sculptor, who was a friend of his, has since recorded their conversation in *Nova Evropa*, one of the leading journals of Yugoslavia.

Two or three weeks before the King left for France, the Yugoslav government, no doubt by his own personal direction, requested the French government to allow it to send thirty (some say forty) Yugoslav secret agents to France to guard his life during his stay there, but the French government declined the request. Eleven days after the assassination, on October 20, 1934, the London *Daily Mail* printed a dispatch from its Belgrade correspondent, Ward Price, stating that King Alexander had expressed his fear of being murdered to Prince [now King] George of England and that Prince George had appealed to Scotland Yard, which requested the Sûreté Nationale to allow ten Scotland Yard detectives to come to France for the duration of Alexander's visit. The French authorities, the dispatch stated, had refused the request. This news story was never denied.

Immediately after the king was murdered, the Sûreté Nationale in Paris tried to throw the blame for the miserable protection of his life on the Marseilles police. But the Marseilles police declined to take the blame, and curious things began to come to light. On October 12 and 13, 1934, Paris newspapers printed the following official statement of the municipal government of Marseilles:

"Since rumors are being circulated in Paris that the municipality of Marseilles was opposed to certain measures being taken for the protection of His Majesty King Alexander, especially as regards the use of the army for the service of order, the municipality feels obliged to state that it was not consulted regarding the organization of the reception of the king; that all instructions to maintain order were issued by representatives of the Sûreté Nationale of Paris; and finally, that the Mayor of Marseilles was not invited to take part in the parade."

Simultaneously, the Prefecture of the Bouches-du-Rhône issued this public statement: "The Sûreté Nationale alone had all the responsibility for the organization of order and protection; the Marseilles police were only the agents for the execution of that organization; and the Marseilles authorities had urged that the king's automobile be surrounded with special agents on motor cycles, but the officials of the Sûreté Nationale had rejected their recommendation."

The French government promptly removed from his post Prefect of Police Jouhannaud of Marseilles "for neglect of duty," whereupon the municipal council of Marseilles in public session on November 1, 1934,

adopted a resolution of protest "against the campaign of calumny carried on against the city on the subject of responsibility for the assassination on October 9," and gave M. Jouhannaud the Grand Medal of the City of Marseilles.

The *Jour,* a Paris newspaper, undertook an inquiry of its own and published its findings on November 6, 1934. It said that M. Jouhannaud and his assistants had organized a special guard of fourteen agents on motorcycles. This police detail was to encircle the royal automobile and accompany it on its progress through the streets of Marseilles. But at the last moment Commissioner Sisteron, chief of the bureau charged with the protection of distinguished visitors, which is part of the Sûreté Nationale, ordered the motorcycles to stay away. He never openly admitted this charge but he gave the press the following evasive declaration: "Conscious of my duties as a state official and respectful of my chiefs, I have kept silent, and I cannot but continue silent until a definite decision is taken in regard to me."

In view of the foregoing facts in the case of King Alexander's assassination, is it not natural to conclude that someone, or some group of persons, in Paris had decided or agreed that if there was anyone in Marseilles who wanted to kill him, those responsible for his safety would do nothing to prevent the murder?

Other questions occur. Whose instructions controlled Sisteron in his order against the motorcycle guard? Who, if anyone, paid that person or those persons? Italy? Hungary? . . . The Nazis?

Does anyone in France, apart from those responsible for the "negligence" in Marseilles, know the truth? Possibly. But if there are such persons, they—in great probability—are not free to speak.

APPENDIX II

The Problem of Trieste

By Ivan Tschok

The author of the following study is President of the National Committee of the Yugoslavs from Italy; a Slovenian; one of the foremost authorities on the subject from the Yugoslav point of view. The study was published early in '43 under the auspices of the Slovenian American National Council elected in Cleveland, Ohio, on December 5, '42, by the representatives of about two hundred thousand Americans of Slovenian origin. It is given here in full—partly for itself, partly as a general hint to Americans of the complexity of the European problem:

Trieste is a city of 250,000 inhabitants. Situated at the deep end of a gulf in the northeast corner of the Adriatic Sea, it developed during the last century into a port of great importance. The growth of Trieste occurred while the city was independent of Italy and free to compete with Italian ports for its share of the Mediterranean trade.

In 1918, after the collapse of Austria-Hungary, Trieste and the provinces of Istra and Goritsa were occupied by Italy. The new territory became known as the "Julian March" (*Venezia Giulia,* in Italian; *Julijska Krajina,* in Yugoslav). In addition, Italy annexed Zadar, the principal city of Dalmatia, and Fiume, the only natural and technically developed port of Croatia. Zadar and Fiume do not concern us here. Yugoslavia's right to these two ports on the eastern shore of the Adriatic is universally recognized. But the fundamental unity of the Julian March with Yugoslavia is not so well understood.

A majority of the people in Trieste are of Italian origin, or, at least, they profess to be Italian. But all around Trieste there is a compact Slavic population. Out of some 300,000 inhabitants in sixteen districts which surround Trieste on all sides, only about one per cent are Italian. On the East, this Slavic mass extends into Slovenia and Croatia. All the territory from the river Socha (Isonzo) to the Black Sea is uninterruptedly and exclusively Yugoslav. Italy begins west of the Socha. The Julian March as a whole, including Trieste, is a predominantly Yugoslav region. Even the district "Slavia Italiana," west of the Socha, is overwhelmingly Slavic, although it formed a part of Italy before World

War I. According to the Italian Census of 1910 it was inhabited by 56,000 Slavs.

The purpose of this study is to present the historical background of Trieste, its development as a center of industry and trade, its relations with its hinterland and with Venice and the rest of Italy, and to examine the forces which made out of Trieste an Italian island in a Slavic sea. All factual material used is based exclusively on Italian and Austrian statistics which never favored the Slavs. One of the main sources of reference has been the Italian *Enciclopedia Treccani* published in Rome under the auspices of the King of Italy and the Fascist Government.

It is hoped that this study will contribute toward a correct and just solution of the problem of Trieste. Its inclusion in Yugoslavia is dictated not only by ethnological but also by economic reasons, and is a prerequisite of collaboration among the people in this part of the world. The Adriatic and its ports must be equally accessible to all ships of commerce regardless of the flag under which they sail the seas. The sea like the air must be free of all humanity. In addition, adequate guaranties must be given to all those countries of Europe, which constitute the broader hinterland of Trieste, that their right to use the facilities of that port shall not be abridged. Only so the conditions will be created for peaceable and friendly relations among the neighboring countries which will immensely facilitate the work of post-war reconstruction of this part of Europe. A just and democratic Yugoslavia and a just and democratic Italy, respecting each other's interests, will be the best guaranty of peace in the Adriatic and the best assurance of prosperity for the Balkans as well as for Italy. The safety of Italy's boundaries does not lie in the height of the Julian Alps and other natural or artificial barriers, but in friendship with her neighbors, and this means: *in frontiers which will give and guaranty her peace.* Such a peace in this part of Europe would be a most powerful contribution toward the establishment of a European and world-wide federation of peoples, based on equality of rights and duties for all its members.

In 1918 the Italians asserted that they needed a number of strategic positions on the eastern Adriatic coast for their defense and security. In fact, however, acquisition of the Julian March by Italy was a triumph of Italian imperialism. In addition to the Julian March, Italy got many important islands, the city of Zara in Dalmatia and a foothold in Albania. This was her *first* step of aggression against the Balkans. It secured for her predominance in the Adriatic.

Imperialism is insatiable. Every success gives it new appetites—*l'appettito viene mangiando.* In 1939, encouraged by the example of Hitler, who had occupied Austria, Mussolini without any provocation occupied Albania. This was the *second* step.

One of the leading Italians, Cesare Combi, half a century ago wrote

that "he who possesses a maritime harbor of some importance for the national economy has to possess also all the roads leading to it." And at the very moment when Mussolini's soldiers were marching into Albania, another Italian, Dr. Francesco Cianculli, presented the world a book, "Carniola Italiana," in which he asserted that it is a stupidity, even a crime, to separate a port from its natural hinterland. Logically, from his angle, he came to the conclusion that, since the Julian March is not the only hinterland of Trieste, Italy should also occupy all of Yugoslav Slovenia. Thus Italy would become the immediate neighbor of Hungary. Besides, this would mean the amputation of Yugoslavia's life artery leading to Central Europe and it would enhance Italy's chances of becoming the overlord of the entire Balkans. This book could not have been issued without the approval of the Fascist Government. It stated the policy of that government.

In the present war Mussolini tried to achieve these aims at least in part by annexing that part of Slovenia which Hitler left him, by taking all of Dalmatia and Montenegro, and by enlarging Albania at the expense of Yugoslavia. This was the *third* step.

If this should remain permanently so, would not Italian imperialism seek to achieve the fourth, fifth and other steps?

In Europe there are many "national territories" (French, German, etc.) in which frictions arise at the point where different nationalities meet each other. There—say in Alsace-Lorraine—we speak of "mixed" populations.

The Julian March is not such a "mixed" territory. There exists in it a clearly recognizable ethnographical line between the Slavs and the Italians. Still the Italians, though immediate neighbors of the Yugoslavs, proved to be very ignorant about them. They looked upon the Slovenians and the Croatians with the same arrogance with which they regarded the primitive tribes of Central Africa.

The Italians failed to see that the Slovenians and the Croatians are a cultured and progressive people. So far as the standard of living and the level of civilization are concerned, they do not lag behind the other peoples of Western culture and civilization. There are provinces in Italy where, as to general progress and standard of living, the Italian people lag behind the average Slovenian.

Quarrels among the nationalities of Central and Eastern Europe are basically economic and social. For centuries the Germans dominated this part of Europe and exploited the other peoples—mostly Slavs. The "awakening" of these nationalities in the nineteenth century was not merely a "national movement." Its primary aim was attainment of social and economic equality with the Germans. All attempts of the Slavic peoples to achieve political and economic freedom were indignantly denounced by the Germans as an anti-social conspiracy to destroy their vested interests.

Exactly the same relationship prevailed in the Adriatic between the Slavs and the Italians or, rather, the Venetians. Many centuries ago, Venice acquired all important places along the coast of the Adriatic Sea, from Istria down along Dalmatia and Albania. The Venetians were the ruling class. They exploited the Slavs. Italian control of these territories was so complete that only 50 years ago the belief was prevalent that the population of Dalmatia and Istria was entirely Italian. Yet when Dalmatia was freed in 1918, it turned out that out of a population of 715,000 there were only some 4,800 Italians.

The time has passed when the Slavs can be exploited economically and socially either by the Germans or by the Italians. The Slavs of today know that by virtue of their accomplishments they are entitled to the same rights, to the same liberty and self-government, as any other people in the world.

For the South-Slav peasant, among others,—but perhaps principally for him—the present war has the aspect of a struggle between Germans, backed and helped by Latin Fascists (Italy, Vichy-France, Franco-Spain) on the one side and the Slavs on the other side. So the Southern Slavs feel that in their struggle against the Fascists they will always be able to rely upon the backing and the help of their Slav brothers.

The Southern Slavs have nothing against the Italian people in spite of all the immeasurable wrong done to them. Co-operation between them would be of the greatest benefit for both. Collaboration requires mutual respect for each other and each other's interests. Is Italy prepared to do that?

The Yugoslavs have not done any wrong to the Italians. The Italians have demolished the whole structure of a cultural and progressive Yugoslav minority in the Julian March before the present war and during the present war have caused damage beyond measure in occupied Slovenia, Dalmatia, Montenegro. Yugoslavia does not hold any Italian "national territory." Italy holds and has annexed five provinces belonging to the Yugoslav "national territory."

The Yugoslavs ask that the Italians repair the wrong done to them and keep their hands off that which does not belong to them. Only by repairing the wrong and establishing justice will the necessary moral basis for the cooperation of the two neighbors be created.

Italy must evacuate all Slav "national territory" occupied in the present war or after the last war.

Italian intrigues in the Balkans must cease. As Italy indisputably belongs to the Italian people, so the Balkans indisputably belong to the Balkan peoples.

Italian supremacy in the Adriatic has no justification. That sea must be free to all peoples who live along its coast.

These are the conclusions from the lessons of the past which show the path to a better future. Bitter lessons for the Fascists and for all those

Italians who reveled in the imperialistic theories, methods and temporary results of Fascism. But on realizing these facts and on changing the Fascist policy of megalomania into a policy of good neighborliness and friendship toward her neighbors depends first of all Italy's better future.

Knowing the sentiments of the Italians, I realize that it will not be easy for them to see the justice of these claims. The most crucial problem is that of Trieste.

If today, in the midst of a totalitarian war, we wish to speak about the future of the port of Trieste we must without equivocation or passion answer the question: Does Trieste belong to Italy? The answer is "No."

Trieste belongs to its hinterland, to the immediate one, first, and then to all those remoter regions of the Danube Valley to which the port of Trieste is the natural and best, if not the sole, outlet to the sea.

Blunders that were committed on the Eastern coast of the Adriatic after the first World War to indulge a caprice of Italian irredentism—or more exactly, of Italian imperialism—must be avoided in the future.

The evil economic consequences of the bargain struck with Italy at Versailles are well stated by one of the most distinguished American historians, Hendrick van Loon:

"As for Fiume and Trieste, the natural outlets for Yugoslavia, the Old Men of Versailles gave these cities to Italy, although she really had no need for them as they would only compete with Venice, which aspired to regain its ancient and honorable position as mistress of the Adriatic. As a result, the grass now grows in the dockyards of Trieste and Fiume while Yugoslavia, as of old, must send its agricultural products by one of three routes. It may send them down the Danube to the Black Sea, which is about as practical as if New York should export its merchandise to London by way of Lake Erie and the St. Lawrence River. It may send them up the Danube to Vienna and from there through one of the mountain passes to Bremen, Hamburg or Rotterdam, which is also an exceedingly expensive procedure. Or it may send them by rail to Fiume, where the Italians, of course, do their best to ruin their Slavic competitors."

It seems that so far as Zara and Fiume are concerned now—after a quarter of a century of experience—even the Italians are beginning to admit that these cities must be returned to the regions to which they belong. And yet, although the problem of Trieste is not only fundamentally the same but even more urgent because Trieste is much more important as a port and its hinterland is much more vast and rich, the Italians and a large section of world opinion, still under the influence of Italian propaganda, look upon Trieste as an integral part of Italy.

The problem of Trieste, therefore, represents one of the most troublesome questions of European post-war reconstruction. The future of Trieste concerns all Southern Slavs. Angelo Vivante, Italian socialist leader, in his book *Irredentismo adriatico* (Firenze 1912) wrote (p. 217):

"Whatever the future political organization of the Southern Slavs may be, it is certain that they will oppose with all their forces a political separation of the Julian region from its hinterland. For it is this region that forms its nearest and most natural maritime outlet." Vivante's words are just as true today as they were thirty-three years ago.

Let us examine the Italian claims to Trieste made after the last World War at the Peace Conference in Paris. After the Government of the United States refused to recognize the validity of the London Pact of April 26, 1915, the Italian Delegation set forth the Italian claims in a Memorandum presented to the Conference on February 7, 1919. In this Memorandum the Italians indicated that in claiming Trieste, Gorizia, and Istria, their aims were "to free their sons still lingering under foreign oppression" and "to attain an assurance of safety both on land and sea." Further, the Italians stated that they were "guided by considerations of geographical continuity, natural defense, historic tradition, national redemption and economic laws of the country." In other words, Italy claimed and obtained these territories on the ground of (1) their geographical continuity with Italy, (2) national defense, (3) national unity, (4) historical development, and (5) economic independence.

The provinces of Trieste, Gorizia and Istria (the Julian March) are geographically united with Carniola and Croatia and not with Italy. The Istrian peninsula is separated from Italy by the Adriatic. The country north of Trieste is mountainous until it passes over into the Italian plain. Exactly up to the border of the mountain the population is Slovenian. Where the plain begins the Italian population also begins. The plain, west of the river Socha (Isonzo), merges into the North-Italian plain, while the geological formation of the mountains, east of the river, is the same as that of the Velebit and the Dinaric Alps along the Yugoslav Adriatic coast. On the river Socha (Isonzo) is the geographical beginning of the Balkan peninsula. These facts are scientifically incontestable. They show that the Julian March, along with her natural capital Trieste, belongs geographically to the Balkan peninsula and not to Italy.*

Italy's claim to these provinces is even less valid on the basis of national defense. Yugoslavia never threatened Italy nor could it do so. Yugoslavia was a new, not yet completely consolidated state, while Italy had been existing for more than seventy years as an independent nation

* Sir Arthur Evans wrote in *The Geographical Journal,* London, April, 1916, that "any attempt to lay hold by Italy of a tract of the Dalmatian terra firma or to annex the purely Croatian islands and large Slovene or Croat districts *east of the valley of the Isonzo* and of Italian Istria (i. e. the west coast of Istria) is incompatible with the existence of an United South Slavonic State . . . Apart from the political and racial complications that such an attempt would infallibly produce the foregoing considerations will sufficiently have shown that in its main operation *it would run counter to the immutable geographical laws that govern Dinaric Nature.*"

and had enough time and opportunity to consolidate. It had three times the population of Yugoslavia and considered itself a great power. It had a much bigger army than Yugoslavia. Italy had a large navy, while Yugoslavia had none. It was Italy which without any provocation attacked Yugoslavia in 1941. If questions of national defense are ever again to be discussed by Italy and Yugoslavia, it is clear that Yugoslavia needs whatever protection she can obtain through strategic borders. But Yugoslavia does not intend to use that argument to establish her right to Trieste.

The main argument on which Italy based her claims to Trieste, and the rest of the Julian March was that she wanted to free her children from the Austrian yoke and unite them with the mother country. What are the facts?

Trieste itself was predominantly Italian, but it had a large Slavic minority. But out of one million inhabitants of the entire Julian March two-thirds were Slovenians and Croatians. Trieste was an island in Yugoslav territory. On all sides it was surrounded by Slavs. Half a mile out of Trieste, Slovenian, not Italian, was the spoken language. Furthermore, out of some 10,000 square kilometers less than 1,000 kilometers of the Julian March was inhabited by the Italians. The rest was Yugoslav "national territory." Slovenians and Croatians lived there for thirteen centuries.

During the last War and at the Peace Conference in Paris, Italian propaganda stressed the point that the Julian March was a racially mixed territory; that no line of demarcation could be drawn between the Italians and the Slavs. But that line can be clearly established on the basis of Austro-Hungarian statistics, which *did not favor the Slavs*. The Census of population taken in 1910, showed that east of the river Socha, in the provinces of Gorizia, Trieste and Carnaro, there were no Italians at all except in the cities of Trieste, Fiume and Gorizia. The number of Slavs and Italians in these districts of the Julian March in 1910 were as follows:

District	*Slavs*	*Italians*
Canale	13,940	23
Gorizia (exclusive of the city itself)	41,430	2,734
Ajdovscina	14,691	9
Komen	14,042	250
Sezhana	15,524	93
Bovec (Plezzo)	5,529	8
Tolmin	15,168	21
Podgrad	16,595	7
Volosko	31,275	946

These statistics show that in the district of Gorizia (without the city) the Italians accounted for only 6.5% and in the district of Volosko only

3% of the population. In seven other districts they did not reach even 1%. In six districts (Kobarid, Cerkno, Idria, Postojna, Ilirska Bistrica, Senozheche) there were 74,610 Slavs and no Italians.

All around Trieste, therefore, there is the purest Slav country without any racial mixture.

The situation is somewhat different in Istria. This province is also predominantly Slavic. In the towns on the west coast, the population is mostly Italian with bigger or smaller Slav minorities. Many centuries ago these towns were conquered by Venice and cut off from the Slav countryside in order not to permit them to prosper economically and become competitors of the Venetian merchant princes. Until the fall of Venice in 1797 they remained fishing villages. Austria built up the port of Pola into a powerful naval base with 50,000 inhabitants. Before the first World War the towns on the west coast of Istria—Capodistria, Pirano, Buje, Parenzo, Rovigno, Dignano, and Pola—had altogether about one hundred thousand Italian inhabitants with Slav minorities. *The rest of the province was a compact Slav mass.* In the province as a whole there were 223,318 Slavs and 147,417 Italians in 1910.

According to Austrian statistics, the population of Trieste consisted of 118,959 Italians and 59,319 Slavs. In addition there were at the time some 40,000 Italian immigrants, citizens of the Kingdom of Italy, who at the outbreak of the war between Austria and Italy in 1915 had to leave Trieste as enemy aliens. But thousands of Slavs were falsely listed as Italians by the authorities.

Geography did not put Trieste into Italy, but rather at the door of Italy. After being a Roman colony, Trieste became an Italian center surrounded on all sides by purely Slavic territory. For centuries Trieste remained an insignificant port without any contact with the surrounding country. After the decline of Venice, Trieste began to develop into an important Mediterranean port. Immigrants started to pour into it from all parts of Europe in search of employment and profits. Since the natives were Italians, Italian became the language of the street and of business. In the nineteenth century the population of Trieste began to grow rapidly with the development of new business enterprises. Lloyd Austriaco, Assicurazioni Generali and Riunione Adriatic were established in 1831. The railroad connecting Trieste with Vienna and new dockyards were built in 1857. Porto Nuovo, with its fine harbor installations, was completed between 1869 and 1883. The splendid Transalpine railroad was built in 1907.

The manpower required for operation of these enterprises came from the surrounding Yugoslav regions, and the population of Trieste became largely Slavic. According to the Census of Population of 1900, Trieste had 178,000 inhabitants. Of this total, 139,000 or 78% were born in overwhelmingly Slavic Julian March and 10,000 or 5½% in Carniola which was exclusively Slavic. Thus Trieste became racially a Yugoslav city.

The municipal administration of Trieste was in Italian hands. About the beginning of the last century, the authorities started an active policy of Italianization. In 1861 the city council enacted a law prohibiting the use of any language except Italian in public schools. No Yugoslav schools were allowed for Yugoslav children. A special organization, Lega Nazionale (National League), was created for the purpose of Italianizing Yugoslav children. No Slovenian or Croatian could obtain employment in the municipal enterprises of Trieste unless he consented to be classified as an Italian. In addition the city administration promoted the immigration of Italians from the Kingdom of Italy, then a foreign country, even from such remote parts as Sicily. Importation of aliens was permitted by Vienna in order to weaken the Yugoslav strength in Trieste.

Tens of thousands of Slavs were "Italianized," but their names showed their Slavic origin. It is difficult to describe the chauvinism, intolerance, aggressiveness and ruthlessness with which the Italians under Austria treated the Slavs in Trieste. Like Hitler in *Mein Kampf* they looked upon Slavs as an inferior race. Under the motto *Osare Tutto* ("Dare Everything") the Italians were determined to smash the Slavic population in the Julian March.

But the Yugoslavs refused to be smashed. They progressed. They built their own private schools, developed their commercial and financial enterprises, controlled their own banks, co-operatives, and so on. Before the outbreak of the war in 1914 the Italians in Trieste were afraid that the Slavs would become the dominating element in the city, just as they had overwhelmed the Italians in the cities along the Dalmatian coast—Split (Spalato), Shibenik (Sebenico) and others. Had the war not broken out in 1914, the Slavs would have become dominant also in Zadar (Zara), Rijeka (Fiume), Trst (Trieste) and Gorica (Gorizia).

The war of 1914-1918 interrupted this peaceful penetration of the cities of the Julian March by the Slavs. After the war, the Fascists stopped it by brutal force and attempted to reverse it. When asked by a Slav member of the Italian parliament in Rome about the future of the Slavs in Italy, Mussolini answered without any sense of shame that all Slavs within the Italian borders would be "assimilated" or Italianized. Mussolini's secretary, Giunta, described all Slavic citizens of Italy as *"turba anonima di vinti"* or "a nameless bunch of vanquished people." The entire apparatus of the state, the church, the schools, the army, the Fascist Party was employed to "assimilate" the Slavs. Their personal property, liberty and security were attacked by means of legislative acts and municipal decrees and by brutal terrorism. In the history of mankind there are not many examples of such totalitarian, inhuman and ruthless racial intolerance.

The Fascist authorities in Trieste prohibited employment of Slavs from the immediate neighborhood of the city and promoted the immigration of Italians from remote parts of the country. The Italian *Enciclopedia*

Treccani for 1937 states: "After the armistice, immigration (to Trieste) was restricted principally in favor of Italy which sent to the redeemed city above all . . . railroad clerks and workers, government employees, teachers, lawyers, doctors, etc." In 1931, according to the same source, there were in Trieste 18,106 persons from the Italian province of Veneto; 7,160 from Puglie; 3,253 from Sicily; 3,084 from Emilia, and 2,581 from Lombardy.

But the results of Fascist policy were negative. Huge material damage was done to the Slavs, but oppression only increased their national consciousness. The Fascists could not arrest the movement for equality started in the nineteenth century among the Slavs throughout Austria-Hungary. Before the French Revolution, the Slavs were an amorphous mass without national consciousness. They were not dangerous to the ruling minority which peacefully enjoyed the fruits of its absolute power. But the same force which gave birth to Italian nationalism also aroused the Slavs. They began to demand political, social and economic equality with the Italians, Germans and Hungarians. After the collapse of Austria-Hungary, that struggle was continued in the Julian March. The present war is simply a continuation of the attempt of the united Fascists—Italians, Germans and Hungarians—to maintain their supremacy in Central and South-Eastern Europe.

Between the two World Wars there arose in Italy a special kind of literature aiming to prove that Italy, as the heir to Rome and Venice, was entitled to be the master of the Mediterranean (Mare Nostrum) and control the Balkans, Asia Minor and North Africa. On this "historical" basis Italy, as "heir to Rome," could claim for herself Istanbul, Vienna, Cologne, Spain and Britain. Such literature is not to be taken seriously, but undoubtedly the political history of a town or a country shows in many cases where its economic development and progress are best assured. In this respect Trieste is a classical example. In a thousand years of its history Trieste has always been bound to the regions lying behind its coastal district, and never to Italy. The peoples living between the Julian Alps, the Sudeten and Carpathian Mountains, and in the Danube and Sava valleys gravitate toward the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea. The most direct gravitation line passes through the Julian March and comes out at Trieste.

Trieste was not important until it became independent in the thirteenth century. But as soon as it established its independence, Venice became its mortal enemy. The ambition of Venice was to become the undisputed master of the Adriatic. The struggle between Venice and the towns of the eastern coast of the Adriatic lasted for centuries. Trieste was a fearful rival. It was the most dangerous obstacle to Venice's ambition of converting the Adriatic Sea into a Gulf of Venice. Trieste, therefore, had to be destroyed. Four times in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Venice waged war against Trieste and against the Duke of Austria to whom

Trieste appealed for help. Four times Venice took and lost the coveted town.

Finally in 1382, to avoid the deadly grasp of Venice, Trieste asked the Duke of Austria for his protection and surrendered to him of its own free will. *By this act Trieste detached itself deliberately and finally from Italy's political history, openly and clearly manifesting the will to share its future with its hinterland upon which it was dependent.* Austria then ruled over Istria and Carniola. Trieste's immediate hinterland, and over Styria and Carinthia, its more distant hinterland,—over all territories which gravitated economically toward Trieste.

This political status of Trieste, created in 1382, remained unchanged until 1918.

Austria's protection was not immediately adequate. At that time the Hapsburgs were not a maritime power and could not yet compete for supremacy on the seas. For four centuries Venice dominated the Adriatic. But Trieste fought on. It fought for the freedom of the seas. That principle the oligarchy of Venice refused to accept. Unable to conquer Trieste, Venice tried to buy it. A nobleman, Fra Paolo Sarpi, advised the Doge "to profit by some urgent need of the Emperor, such as used to happen often, to buy Trieste from him for cash. No matter what sum, it could not be spent better."

After the discovery of America, the rivalry between Trieste and Venice ceased to be important. The movement of European trade from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic spelled Venice's downfall. Charles VI, Emperor of Austria, proclaimed the liberty of the Adriatic and made Trieste a free port in 1717. Venice, which in 1631 had prohibited the wedding cortege of the Emperor from crossing the Adriatic, was so weakened that it had to tolerate this proclamation. After the decline of Venice Trieste began to grow. After obtaining the freedom of the seas, its communications with the hinterland developed rapidly and its population increased by leaps and bounds. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Trieste had only 3,000 inhabitants. In 1824 its population was 27,000. In 1840 it rose to 50,000. In 1869 it was 80,000. By the end of the last century Trieste had 155,000 inhabitants. People from all parts of the world, mostly adventurers, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, Germans, French, Italians came to Trieste in search of a better future. The population of the city had only one aim in life: business and gain. It was totally devoid of any national or political consciousness. As late as 1848 a Venetian newspaper described the inhabitants of Trieste as "a great mob of cosmopolitan merchants who with great audacity, refined knavery and with the actual aid of the Austrian Government have deprived Venice and Italy as a whole of flourishing commerce—a bunch of unwelcome adventurers." This complaint of the Venetian newspaper is simply one more proof of the fact that the economic expansion and prosperity of Trieste have always been inseparable from its political union with hinterland. The

AUSTRIA
Drava
Sava
TRBIŽ
TARVISIO
Tagliamento
BOVEC
PLEZZO
REZIJA
RESIA
Soča
Triglav
1864
BLED
RADOVLJICA
Bohinj
KRANJ
KOBARID
CAPORETTO
GEMONA
BENEŠKA SLOVENIJA
SLAVIA ITALIANA
TOLMIN
TOLMINO
ŠKOFJA LOKA
ŠT. PETER SLOV.
S. PIETRO
KANAL
CANALE
GIVIDALE
CIVIDALE
UDINE
PROV. UDINE
ITALY
PROV. GORIZIA
IDRIJA
LJUBLJANA
JUGOSLAVIA
CORMONS
KRMIN
GORICA
GORIZIA
LOGATEC
GRADIŠCA
AJDOVŠČINA
AIDUSSINA
VIPAVA
VIPACCO
KOMEN
COMENO
MONFALCONE
TRIŽIC
CERVIGNANO
POSTOJNA
POSTUMIA
RAKEK
CERKNICA
SEŽANA
SESANA
SENOŽEČE
SENOSECCHIA
TRST
TRIESTE
PROV. TRIESTE
MILJE
MUGGIA
PROV.
PODGRAD
CASTELNUOVO D'ISTRIA
ILIR. BISTRICA
VILLA DEL NEVOSO
CARNARO
(PROV. DI FIUME)
PIRAN
PIRANO
KOPER
CAPODISTRIA
UMAG
UMAGO
BUJE
BUIE D'ISTRIA
BUZET
PINGUENTE
VOLOSKO
OPATIJA
ABBAZIA
RIJEKA
FIUME
NOVI GRAD
CITTANOVA D'ISTRIA
MOTOVUN
MONTONA
PAZIN
PISINO
ADRIATIC SEA
POREČ
PARENZO
PROV. ISTRIA
(PROV. DI POLA)
LABIN
ALBONA
ROVINJ
ROVIGNO
VODNJAN
DIGNANO
KRNICA
CARNIZZA D'ARSA
KRK
CRES
CHERSO
PULA
POLA
CRES
CHERSO
MALI LOŠINJ
LUSSIN PICCOLO
JULIJSKA KRAJINA
VENEZIA GIULIA
State frontiers
Provincial frontiers
Jugoslavs
Italians
Germans
DALMACIJA
ZADAR
ZARA
PELAGRUŽ
PELAGOSA
BUŠAC
CAZZA
LASTOVO
LAGOSTA

same realization occurs throughout centuries in the reports sent to the Emperor of Austria by the City Council. For example, in 1518 in a document addressed to Emperor Maximilian, the representatives of the town stated that Trieste was *antemurale ad provinciam Carniolae . . . emporium Carsiae, Carniolae, Styriae et Austriae.* Another memorandum, addressed to the Emperor in 1673, states that Trieste regarded itself as "established by nature to serve as a stepping stone to the countries of the North."

In 1848, the year of revolution, the "Societa di Triestini," which represents the beginning of Italian nationalism in Trieste, declared in its platform that the role of Trieste was to serve as "an emporium of the countries this side of the Danube."

One more idea has for centuries dominated the life of Trieste. That was the anti-Venetian attitude of its inhabitants. Proclamation of freedom of trade on the Adriatic by Charles VI and the privileges granted by Empress Maria Theresa to the town were hailed in Trieste as the final deliverance from Venice's deadly grip. They laid the foundation for free competition, for free expansion of trade.

On October 17, 1797, the peace treaty signed between Napoleon and Austria gave to Austria Venice and all its possessions, among them Istria, Dalmatia and all the towns on the Eastern coast of the Adriatic. This event marked the death of Venice, the most potent Mediterranean republic for a thousand years. For Trieste it meant hegemony on the Adriatic Sea and prosperity.

After the Battle of Austerlitz, the treaty of Pressburg of December 26, 1805, compelled Austria to yield these possessions to France. Napoleon created out of them the "Illyrian Provinces" and Austria was cut off from the Adriatic. Cut off from its hinterland, Trieste suffered an immediate and catastrophic collapse.

After the Congress of Vienna, in 1815, Austria regained the possession of these provinces, and the commerce of Trieste rose to its earlier level and quickly surpassed it. From 1819 on Trieste was permitted by the Emperor, as a reward for its "patriotic" attitude during the French occupation, to bear the title *fedelissima* (the most faithful one.)

The mercantile soul of Trieste and its cosmopolitan character found their expression again in 1848. Trieste refused to have anything to do with Italy in spite of the awakening of Italian nationalism. The union of Italy's princes, headed by Charles Albert, king of Piedmont, against Austria seemed to have made the liquidation of Austrian possessions in Italy inevitable. Trieste did not associate itself with the cause of Italy. The Italian princes sent a fleet before Trieste to encourage its population to rise against Austria and to make possible its union with Italy. Despite the desperate situation in which Austria found itself, nothing happened in Trieste. When the Italian fleet proclaimed the blockade of the city, it provoked in the dominating mercantile class of Trieste a definitely

anti-Italian spirit, because the blockade prejudiced their business interests.

Italian defeats on the plains of Lombardy were hailed in Trieste with magnificent manifestations of loyalty to Austria. In the liberal press the indissolubility of Trieste's destinies with those of its hinterland was repeated and emphasized. This attitude aroused the praise of the commander of the place, the Austrian Marshal Gyulay. When after the turmoil of the political conflagrations of 1848-50 the town's delegates went to Vienna to deliver to the Emperor an address of loyalty and homage, they were awarded a new statute granting new privileges to the city of Trieste. It was the recompense "for the wise and loyal attitude" toward Austria. The sense of indissoluble ties with the hinterland had once more prevailed.

A change in this attitude set in during the last decades of the nineteenth century when Italian irredentism began to appear. Its rise was due to the existence of a united Italy and even more so to the awakening national consciousness and the progress of the Slavs who threatened to overwhelm the Italian population by sheer numbers and by their growing political and economic strength. Italian irredentism in Trieste remained the spiritual property of an intellectual minority. The business men regardless of nationality, the lower classes and, of course, all non-Italians, remained faithful to the traditional union with the territories lying behind from which they derived their existence, their wealth and their progress.

Italian irredentism in the Julian March would probably have remained without major consequences if it had not become an instrument of the imperialistic foreign policy of the Kingdom of Italy. Few as they were, the Italian irredentists in Trieste were very fanatic. One of their leaders said before the first world war: "Trieste must be annexed to Italy even if grass should grow in its beautiful harbor." The motto of Trieste's irredentism was: "Italy or death." They had Italy and the death of a seaport and a center of commerce.

Italy, as "heir to Venice," adopted the latter's foreign policy and demanded Trieste and a great deal of the Eastern coast of the Adriatic, Istria and almost the whole of Dalmatia with all the important islands as the price of her entrance into the war in 1915 on the side of the Allied Powers. Italy was determined not to allow the presence of any other naval power in the Adriatic.

Italy wanted to convert the Adriatic into a closed Italian lake, a new *golfo di Venezia.* For such reasons and purposes Italy took in 1918 Trieste, Istria, Fiume, Zara, Valone and a number of important islands. Yugoslavia succeeded at the Peace Conference in reducing Italy's appetites to these territories but as soon as she could manage, in 1941, Italy "annexed" without any delay Dalmatia with all the islands, Montenegro and Albania, which are now part of the "Kingdom of Italy."

Italy's real intentions in the Adriatic were quite frankly confessed by

the *Giornale d'Italia*, April 19, 1915, (proprietors are the then Prime Minister Salandra and his Foreign Minister Baron Sonnino) in these words: "The principal objective of Italy in the Adriatic is the solution, once for all, of the politico-strategic question of a sea which is commanded in the military sense from the Eastern shore, and such a problem can be solved only by one method—by elimination from the Adriatic of every other war fleet. From the military point of view Italy ought not to make a compromise. Not a fort, nor a gun, nor a submarine that is not Italian ought to be in the Adriatic."

In the same manner, plainly and brutally, were expressed true Italian intentions by the well known Italian specialist for economic questions, Mario Alberti, who wrote: "Possessing Genoa, Venice, Trieste, and Fiume, *Italy is going to dominate all the traffic between Central Europe and the Mediterranean basin.* Genoa is the Swiss harbor for the Mediterranean traffic. Venice is the harbor of South-Western Germany; Trieste is the harbor of South-Eastern Germany and Austria; Fiume the harbor of Hungary and Croatia. In the commercial negotiations with the States of lower Central Europe *a threat of interdiction of transit* of their products through our ports in the Mediterranean and the Adriatic would be enough to obtain custom facilities which we would not be able to get otherwise. By way of Trieste, Venice, Fiume, Zara, Bari, Spalato, *Italy is going to monopolize the traffic of the Adriatic.* Italy is going to be the founder of the new commerce between the Adriatic and the Balkans, between the Adriatic and the East. It will not have to worry then about competition of the other navies in the Adriatic, nor about the pressure of strong foreign commerce which aimed to expel Italian traffic from the Orient. *Then at last the Adriatic will be properly Italian and for Italy.* Because of the possession of Trieste and Fiume, Italy will have in its hands all the big economic currents between Central Europe, the Mediterranean basin and the Far East."

These sketchy explanations summarize Italy's modern policy in the Adriatic. Italy's attitude has always been the exact copy of Venice's greediness centuries ago. Italy wants all for herself, leaving nothing for others. She wants to be the sole mistress in the Adriatic.

The importance of the Adriatic for the whole Mediterranean basin is apparent. There is no doubt that the power which is the sole master of it is a serious menace to all other Mediterranean powers. Italy's plans to control the Adriatic were the first step in her intentions to make out of the Mediterranean an Italian sea, *Mare Nostrum.* Germany also had plans to become an Adriatic power. In dividing Yugoslavia, occupying and annexing its western part, Germany's ultimate aim was to extend its influence over the Mediterranean after the present war.

If a just and durable peace is to be achieved in the Balkans and along the Adriatic, Italy must withdraw from the Eastern Adriatic coast, from

Albania, Dalmatia, Istria and from Trieste. Italy must go west of the river Socha within her clearly recognizable ethnographical boundaries.

That the ethnographical border between the Slavs and the Italians is along the river Socha had been acknowledged by many first-class authorities, Italians and others.

In 1809 Napoleon was urged by Eugene Beauharnais on the basis of "strategic necessities" and by the notables of Venice on the ground of "economic necessities" to draw the boundaries between the newly created "Illyric provinces" and the Kingdom of Italy more to the East of the river Socha. Nevertheless, he fixed the frontier between the two States west of the Socha, along the line which separates the Slavs and the Italians.

In November, 1848 the liberal organ *Giornale di Trieste* demanded that the frontiers should be "placed on the river Socha, where Italy's smiling sky dies."

The manifesto of the "Italian Federal Union" demanding the creation of a federal Italy expressed itself in these words in 1848: "Italy will not be happy nor peaceful until it arrives at the banks of the Isonzo."

In his book *I doveri dell'uomo* (The Duties of Man), Mazzini wrote in 1860: "Open a compass; put one point of the compass in the North of Italy upon Parma and the other one upon the estuary of the Varo river. Draw then with the latter a semicircle in the direction of the Alps. The point falling upon the mouth of the Socha is the frontier God gave you."

In 1866 a "vademucum for Italian Officers in the field" fixes Italy's frontiers on the Socha; so does an official map published in the new Kingdom of Italy.

In 1866 Italian Foreign Minister Visconti-Venosta gave instructions to Ambassador Nigra in Vienna to obtain, with the aid of Napoleon, a rectification of the Venetian frontier, and stated that this frontier should be brought to the Socha.

In the same year Lamarmora, Italian Prime Minister, wrote: "Geography indicates that the Socha is the true frontier of Italy on the corner of Friaul." Lamarmora's foreign policy limited itself to the acquisition of Venice and Trento, excluding Trieste. In asking Italian territories from Austria, he says that he never had Trieste in mind.

Lamarmora recognized that Trieste "is surrounded by Slav populations which have nothing to do with the Italians and which do not wish to have any contact with them save commercial ones. It is in the general interest to develop commerce to the highest degree, but without creating a confusion of interests which are and will remain forever separated. If by chance Trieste should come under Italy, it would be a source of difficulties and a very heavy danger for our Kingdom."

Cavour, the great Italian statesman, in the instructions given to his Minister Valerio said: "I beg you to avoid any expression which would

indicate that the new Kingdom of Italy tends to the conquest, beside of Venice, also of Trieste with Istria and Dalmatia. I know very well that, all along the coast, in the towns there are centers of Italian race and aspirations. But in the countryside all inhabitants are Slavs and we would create enemies for ourselves among the Slavs, Hungarians and Germans, if we showed that we intend to deprive such a vast part of Central Europe of every outlet to the Mediterranean."

Baron Sonnino, Italian Foreign Minister during the first World War, wrote in 1881 (*Rassegna Settimanale*): "The population of Trieste is mixed like all the populations on the East side of our frontier. To claim Trieste as a right would be an exaggeration of the principles of nationalities."

Seton-Watson, professor at Oxford, treating the question of a readjustment of the frontiers in Central Europe in his book *Treaty Revision and the Hungarian Frontiers* (London, 1934), writes that only the Yugoslav-Italian and the Austro-Italian frontiers can be changed according to ethnographical lines, and drawn in a manner that no new minorities be formed.

But the most eloquent evidence of what Italy is entitled to claim is, perhaps, the proposition of Baron Sonnino of April 8, 1915, to the Government of Austria. *Italy could claim from Austria the maximum she was entitled to. Sonnino demanded rectification of the old Austro-Italian border, mostly to the river Isonzo with some deviation east of it, not including Trieste.* Trieste, with its territory, was to be an autonomous and independent State in all that regards its internal, international, military, legislative, financial and administrative policies. It was to remain a free port, which would not be entered by either Austro-Hungarian or Italian soldiers.

And even Austria, acknowledging Italy's right to territories which were really Italian, offered on May 19, 1915, the following rectification of the Italo-Austrian frontier: "Austria-Hungary agrees to cede to Italy the territory *on the western bank of the Socha in so far as the population is wholly of Italian nationality.*"

The city of Trieste is an industrial and commercial center of first importance. Its industries give employment to 50,000 people out of 250,000 inhabitants. These industries include petroleum refineries, iron foundries and shipbuilding, chemical factories, enterprises producing canned fish and mineral oils, silk and cotton spinning, tobacco-manufacturing, jute works and marble quarries. In addition Trieste was the most important coffee market in Europe. Almost all these industries were created before the first World War and were intended to serve the needs of the territories which were within the frame of Trieste's economic sphere, not including Italy or any part of Italy.

The most important natural products of the country are wine, fruits and olive oil.

But the real importance of Trieste is its harbor. It has an area of more than 250 acres with breakwaters, piers, cranes, railroad yards and installations, grain elevators, etc. Generally it is one of the technically best equipped and organized harbors in the world. The numerous enterprises of Trieste had branch establishments, representatives and agencies throughout the world. The merchants of Trieste were better acquainted than anybody else with the needs, tastes, methods of work and credit standing of the merchants in the East Mediterranean.

Trieste was the center of 16 shipping companies, among them the world-famous Cosulich-lines, Lloyd Triestino, Tripcovich Society Sitmar, Maritima, Navigazione Libera Pollich, etc. At the beginning of the century new and direct services were started to East Africa, Central America and Mexico. The service to India and the Far East as well as that to the Mediterranean ports was much improved and Trieste was made the center of the large emigration from Austria to America. Besides being the principal port of Austria, Trieste was before the first World War the central port for much of Germany's trade with the Mediterranean and the East.

	Trieste		Venice	
Year	1,000 *Tons*	*Percent*	1,000 *Tons*	*Percent*
1913	3,450	100.0	2,664	100.0
1919	1,479	42.9	1,276	47.8
1920	1,475	47.7	1,271	47.7
1921	1,491	43.2	1,660	62.3
1922	1,506	43.7	1,737	65.2
1923	2,051	54.5	2,014	75.5
1924	2,857	82.8	2,296	88.4
1925	2,854	82.7	2,122	79.6
1926	2,426	70.3	2,010	75.4
1927	2,571	74.5	2,448	88.1
1928	2,696	78.1	2,788	104.6
1929	3,067	88.9	3,015	113.1
1930	2,443	70.8	2,962	111.1
1931	2,472	71.6	2,794	104.8
1932	2,146	62.2	2,832	106.3
1933	1,889	54.7	2,966	111.3
1934	2,462	71.3	3,754	140.9
1935	2,526	73.2	4,415	165.7
1936	2,233	64.7	3,629	136.2
1937	3,170	91.6	3,470	130.2
1938	3,264	94.6	3,971	149.0

The average annual volume of traffic going through the port of Trieste rose from 2.1 million tons in 1901-1905 to 3.1 million tons in 1911-1913. In spite of the great boom in international trade after the first World War, the commerce of Trieste never again reached the volume of 1913. The reason for the decline of Trieste under the rule of Italy was the competition of Venice, its ancient enemy. The foregoing table shows the phenomenal increase in the trade of Venice and a complete stagnation of the commerce of Trieste.

The difference is even bigger if the value of the goods is taken as a basis. Before the war there were transported through Trieste colonial wares low in weight and high in price, while after the war the commerce of Trieste consisted largely of coal, wood, ore and similar commodities high in weight and low in price.

Until 1913 Trieste was not only a seaport but a great commercial center for all the countries lying in its hinterland. Under Italy it has been reduced to the status of a transit port.

Between 1921 and 1933 the shipyards of Trieste produced 101 merchantmen of 605,000 tons and 28 warships of 48,000 tons. A great deal of this shipbuilding was done for foreign countries. Later on production fell considerably owing to the liquidation of the shipbuilding and other industrial plants in Trieste in favor of Venice and Genoa.

The global tonnage of Trieste's shipping in 1913 was 581,859 gross tons. After the war, shipowners made huge efforts to prepare their ships for larger tasks. They increased the capacity of their ships to 684,443 tons in 1928. But soon after began the liquidation of Trieste's economic position. Venice and Genoa doubled their efforts to beat Trieste's competition for the trade of Central Europe. Owing to increasing protests from the maritime and commercial circles of Trieste, the Fascist Government in Rome, it is true, issued a number of decrees designed to protect the interests of Trieste's trade, but they were completely inadequate. The big Cosulich concern, embracing two shipping companies, shipbuilding yards and docks in Trieste and Monfalcone, as well as an airway company, with a capital of two billion lire, went into bankruptcy in 1929 and fell under the control of the Banca Commerciale Italiana in Milan. Cosulich's crash caused the collapse of the oldest and strongest bank in Trieste, the Banca Commerciale Triestina. The shipbuilding companies had to reduce their capital and merge into a new company, but the new company was controlled by the capitalists of Venice, Genoa, Milan and Rome.

Within fifteen years after Italian annexation, all the big commercial, financial and maritime enterprises of Trieste had come under the control of Venice or other parts of inner Italy.

Annexation of the Julian March—Istra, Goritsa, and Trieste—by Italy in 1918 constituted an act of imperialistic aggression against the Slovenian

and Croatian majority in those regions and against the economic interests of the entire population of Trieste. This act of aggression was allowed by the Great Powers at the Paris Peace Conference because of the bargain they had struck with the Government of Rome in 1915 in order to bribe Italy to declare war against Germany and Austria-Hungary.

The Julian March belongs to Yugoslavia on the basis of any criterion advanced by the United Nations for the settlement of international disputes and on the basis of the principles on which the world hopes to build a new international society after the defeat of German Nazism, Italian Fascism and Japanese militarism.

In spite of the sacrifices endured in this war, the people of Yugoslavia demand nothing from Italy except what belongs to them. They do not crave vengeance. They demand justice.

Trieste is a part of the Julian March, of Slovenia and of Yugoslavia just as the city of New Orleans is a part of Louisiana and of the United States. Trieste belongs to its hinterland. The United States would not dream of surrendering New Orleans to Mexico if a majority of its population became Mexicans.

A majority of the inhabitants of Trieste are classified as Italian. But neither the size nor the nature of that majority has ever been precisely or impartially determined. The Italian authorities employed all forms of coercion to make the existence of national minorities, that is, Slavs, in the Julian March extremely difficult. The Slavs were compelled even to change their names in order to bury forever their national origin. No one knows how many thousands of these "compulsory" Italians will joyfully resume their real names and nationality when Trieste becomes a part of a new Yugoslavia.

Throughout history Trieste's deadliest opponent and competitor has been Venice. The struggle between the two ports continued under the Crown of Italy. Cut off from its hinterland, Trieste went bankrupt. Its great commercial enterprises, Cosulich, Tripcovich, Pollich—all good Yugoslav names—were liquidated and absorbed by the financial interests of Venice, Genoa, Milan and Rome. Diversion of commerce from Trieste to the ports on the Italian mainland brought poverty to thousands of families which had no place to emigrate to, while the Italian Government continued to colonize the city with "real" Italians from as far south as Sicily.

The argument that inclusion of Trieste into Yugoslavia would create a problem of Italian "irredentism" is without foundation. The Julian March is an economic and political unit. Yugoslavia has never persecuted its [Italian and German] minorities. It will not do so in the future. But it is strange that distinguished Italians in the United States condemn Yugoslav claims to Trieste on the ground that its inclusion in Yugoslavia would violate the principle of national self-determination, while at the same time they look with horror upon Yugoslav claims to Goritsa and

Istra on the ground that they are based on the spirit of nationalism which must play no role in the reconstruction of the world after this war. In other words, nationalism is good for the Italians but bad for the Yugoslavs.

Yugoslavia's claims to Trieste are based on solid facts of history, ethnography and economics. There is a clear line of demarcation between the Yugoslav and Italian peoples. That line lies west of the river Socha and leaves Trieste in Yugoslavia. Trieste lies on Yugoslav soil just as New York lies on American soil. Trieste and its immediate hinterland are overwhelmingly Yugoslav. Trieste is the capital of the Yugoslav Julian March. Without its hinterland, Trieste is doomed to economic death.

Of course, Yugoslavia could put forward other claims to Trieste. Italy is an enemy country. Italy has done irreparable damage to Yugoslavia. The dead can never be resurrected. It will take years to rebuild the destroyed towns and villages. It is not difficult to imagine how the people of Slovenia, Dalmatia, Montenegro and Croatia feel about Italy. But although Yugoslavia is unquestionably entitled to reparation from Italy it does not need to use that argument to establish its claim to the Julian March and its natural and inevitable capital Trieste.

APPENDIX III

Stalin on the Yugoslav Problem

From a speech delivered by Joseph Stalin on March 30, '25 during a debate at a meeting of the Yugoslav Commission of the Communist International whose job it was to formulate the policy of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Stalin was replying to a Yugoslav Communist named Semich with whom he disagreed on several points. The whole speech appears in Stalin's book entitled Leninism. *I quote only the passages that seem to me apropos of this book:*

[Comrade Semich] is loath to consider the national question as being essentially a peasant question; not an agrarian, but a peasant question, for these are two different things. It is quite true that the national question is not to be identified with the peasant quesion, for in addition to peasant questions, the national question includes such problems as national culture, the national state, *etc.* But it is also certain that the peasant question is the basis of the national quesion, its quintessence. That is precisely what explains the fact that the peasantry represents the main army of the national movement; that without the peasant army, there is not nor can there be a powerful national movement. This is what we have in mind when we say that the national question is, *in essence*, a peasant question. It seems to me that Comrade Semich's reluctance to accept this formula lies in his underestimation of the intrinsic strength of the national movement and his failure to understand the profoundly popular and profoundly revolutionary nature of the national movement. This lack of understanding and this underestimation represent a grave danger, for, in practice, they imply underestimation of the inherent potential might which is latent, for instance, in the movement of the Croatians for national emancipation. This underestimation is pregnant with serious complications for the whole of the Yugoslav Communist Party. . . .

[Comrade Semich's] attempt to deal with the national question in Yugoslavia independently of the international situation and the probable course of events in Europe must, undoubtedly, also be regarded as an error. Starting from the fact that at the present moment there is no serious popular movement for independence among the Croatians and

the Slovenians, Comrade Semich arrives at the conclusion that the question of the right of nations to secession is an academic question, that, at any rate, it is not an immediate one. This, of course, is incorrect. Even if we admit that, for the moment, this question is not an immediate one, it might become very immediate if war begins, or when war begins, if a revolution should break out in Europe, or when it breaks out. That war will inevitably begin, and that *they* over there [the Western imperialist powers] are bound to come to blows, there can be no doubt, bearing in mind the nature and development of imperialism [as interpreted by Lenin and Stalin]. . . .

. . . We must also remember that Yugoslavia is not a fully independent country, that she is bound to certain imperialist groups, and that, consequently, she cannot escape the influence of the great forces that are at work beyond her borders. If you are drawing up a national programme for the Yugoslav Party (and this precisely what we are now dealing with), you must remember that this programme must not only be based on what there is at present, but also on what is developing and what will inevitably take place as a result of international relationships. Hence it seems to me that the question of the right of nations to self-determination should be regarded as an immediate and burning question.

. . . The starting point of the national programme must be the postulate . . . that without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of the revolution, the national question cannot be solved at all satisfactorily. . . .

Further, it is imperative that we should include in the national programme a special point concerning the right of nations . . . to secession. . . .

Finally, the programme should include a special point dealing with the national, territorial autonomy of those nationalities in Yugoslavia which do not deem it necessary to secede from that country. Those who think that such a contingency must be excluded are wrong. Under certain circumstances, as a result of the victory of the Soviet revolution in Yugoslavia it may well be that, just as happened in Russia, certain nationalities will not desire to secede. It is, therefore, clear that it is necessary to provide for such a contingency and have in the programme a point on autonomy, having in view the transformation of the state of Yugoslavia into a federation of autonomous national states based on the Soviet system.

Thus, the right of secession must be provided for those nationalities that desire secession, while the right of autonomy must be provided for those nationalities that will prefer to remain within the state of Yugoslavia.

To avoid all misunderstanding, let me add that the *right* to secession must not be understood as an *obligation*, as a duty to secede. A nationality may take advantage of this right an secede, but it may also forego

the right and if it does not wish to exercise it, that is its business, and we cannot but respect this wish. Some comrades turn this right of secession into an obligation, and demand from the Croatians that they secede no matter what happens. This position is wrong, and must be rejected. . . .

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